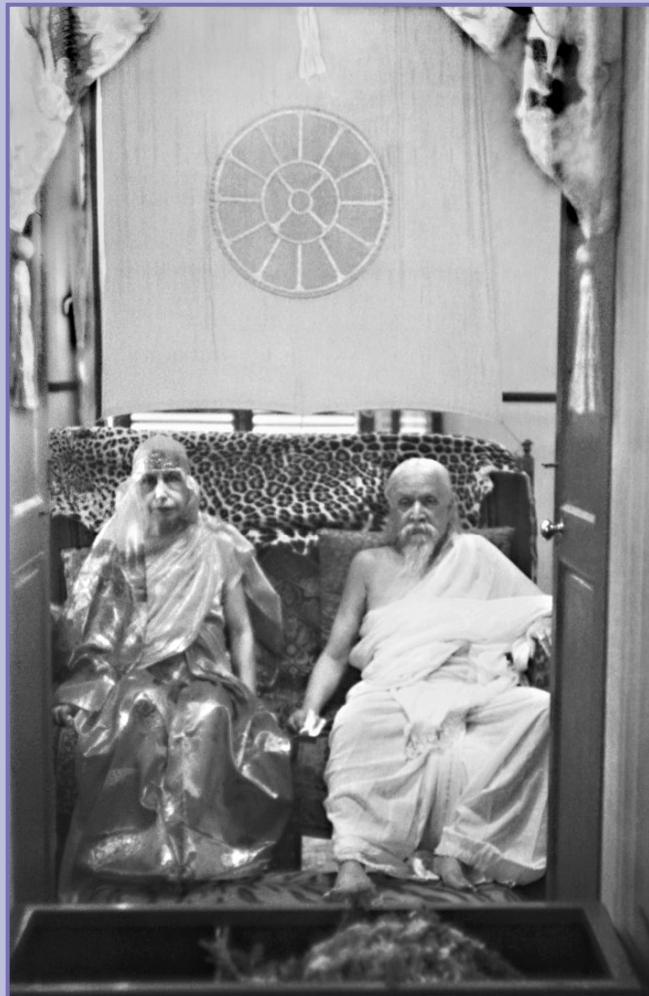


The Mother with Letters on the Mother



Sri Aurobindo

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The Mother

with Letters on the Mother

Publisher's Note

This volume consists of two different but related works of Sri Aurobindo: *The Mother* and *Letters on the Mother*. It also includes his translations of passages from the Mother's *Prayers and Meditations*. These three constituents make up the three parts of the volume.

The Mother consists of six chapters, all of them written in 1927. The first chapter was originally written as a message, the second to fifth chapters as letters. The sixth and longest chapter was written for inclusion in a booklet that eventually comprised the message, the letters, and Chapter 6. This booklet was first published under the title *The Mother* in 1928. The present text has been checked against Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts.

The letters on the Mother included in Part Two have been selected from the large body of letters that Sri Aurobindo wrote to disciples and others between 1927 and 1950. Most of his letters from this period are published in *Letters on Yoga*, volumes 28–31 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. Others appear in volume 35, *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*, and volume 27, *Letters on Poetry and Art*. The letters chosen for inclusion in the present volume deal with the Mother in her individual, universal and transcendent aspects. They have been arranged in five sections. Many letters are preceded by the questions or comments that elicited Sri Aurobindo's reply. The texts of the letters have been checked, whenever possible, against Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts.

The translated extracts from the Mother's *Prières et Méditations* (*Prayers and Meditations*) included in Part Three comprise all the passages that Sri Aurobindo is known to have translated entirely on his own. His translation of "Radha's Prayer" is also included in this part.

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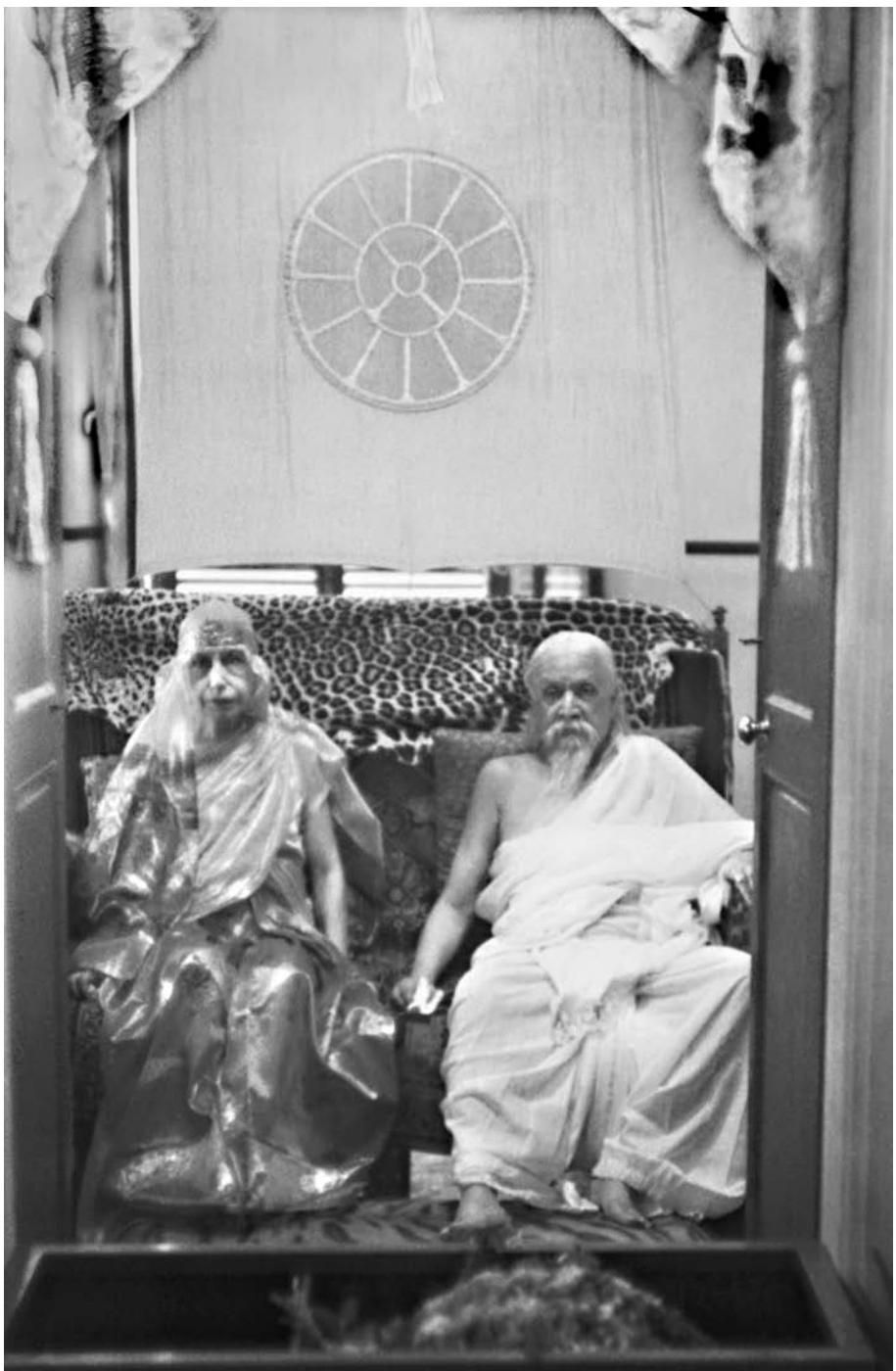
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The Mother and Sri Aurobindo
giving darshan on 24 April 1950

Part One

The Mother

The One whom we adore as the Mother is the divine Conscious Force that dominates all existence, one and yet so many-sided that to follow her movements is impossible even for the quickest mind and for the freest and most vast intelligence. The Mother is the consciousness and force of the Supreme and far above all she creates. But something of her ways can be seen and felt through her embodiments and the more seizable because more defined and limited temperament and ^{action} movements of the goddess forms in whom she consents to be manifest to her creatures.

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Passage from the opening paragraph
of chapter 6 of *The Mother*

I

There are two powers that alone can effect in their conjunction the great and difficult thing which is the aim of our endeavour, a fixed and unfailing aspiration that calls from below and a supreme Grace from above that answers.

But the supreme Grace will act only in the conditions of the Light and the Truth; it will not act in conditions laid upon it by the Falsehood and the Ignorance. For if it were to yield to the demands of the Falsehood, it would defeat its own purpose.

These are the conditions of the Light and Truth, the sole conditions under which the highest Force will descend; and it is only the very highest supramental Force descending from above and opening from below that can victoriously handle the physical Nature and annihilate its difficulties . . . There must be a total and sincere surrender; there must be an exclusive self-opening to the divine Power; there must be a constant and integral choice of the Truth that is descending, a constant and integral rejection of the falsehood of the mental, vital and physical Powers and Appearances that still rule the earth-Nature.

The surrender must be total and seize all the parts of the being. It is not enough that the psychic should respond and the higher mental accept or even the inner vital submit and the inner physical consciousness feel the influence. There must be in no part of the being, even the most external, anything that makes a reserve, anything that hides behind doubts, confusions and subterfuges, anything that revolts or refuses.

If part of the being surrenders, but another part reserves itself, follows its own way or makes its own conditions, then each time that that happens, you are yourself pushing the divine Grace away from you.

If behind your devotion and surrender you make a cover for your desires, egoistic demands and vital insistences, if you put

these things in place of the true aspiration or mix them with it and try to impose them on the Divine Shakti, then it is idle to invoke the divine Grace to transform you.

If you open yourself on one side or in one part to the Truth and on another side are constantly opening the gates to hostile forces, it is vain to expect that the divine Grace will abide with you. You must keep the temple clean if you wish to instal there the living Presence.

If each time the Power intervenes and brings in the Truth, you turn your back on it and call in again the falsehood that has been expelled, it is not the divine Grace that you must blame for failing you, but the falsity of your own will and the imperfection of your own surrender.

If you call for the Truth and yet something in you chooses what is false, ignorant and undivine or even simply is unwilling to reject it altogether, then always you will be open to attack and the Grace will recede from you. Detect first what is false or obscure in you and persistently reject it, then alone can you rightly call for the divine Power to transform you.

Do not imagine that truth and falsehood, light and darkness, surrender and selfishness can be allowed to dwell together in the house consecrated to the Divine. The transformation must be integral, and integral therefore the rejection of all that withstands it.

Reject the false notion that the divine Power will do and is bound to do everything for you at your demand and even though you do not satisfy the conditions laid down by the Supreme. Make your surrender true and complete, then only will all else be done for you.

Reject too the false and indolent expectation that the divine Power will do even the surrender for you. The Supreme demands your surrender to her, but does not impose it: you are free at every moment, till the irrevocable transformation comes, to deny and to reject the Divine or to recall your self-giving, if you are willing to suffer the spiritual consequence. Your surrender must be self-made and free; it must be the surrender of a living being, not of an inert automaton or mechanical tool.

An inert passivity is constantly confused with the real surrender, but out of an inert passivity nothing true and powerful can come. It is the inert passivity of physical Nature that leaves it at the mercy of every obscure or undivine influence. A glad and strong and helpful submission is demanded to the working of the Divine Force, the obedience of the illumined disciple of the Truth, of the inner Warrior who fights against obscurity and falsehood, of the faithful servant of the Divine.

This is the true attitude and only those who can take and keep it, preserve a faith unshaken by disappointments and difficulties and shall pass through the ordeal to the supreme victory and the great transmutation.

II

In all that is done in the universe, the Divine through his Shakti is behind all action but he is veiled by his Yoga Maya and works through the ego of the Jiva in the lower nature.

In Yoga also it is the Divine who is the Sadhaka and the Sadhana; it is his Shakti with her light, power, knowledge, consciousness, Ananda, acting upon the adhara and, when it is opened to her, pouring into it with these divine forces that makes the Sadhana possible. But so long as the lower nature is active the personal effort of the Sadhaka remains necessary.

The personal effort required is a triple labour of aspiration, rejection and surrender,—

an aspiration vigilant, constant, unceasing — the mind's will, the heart's seeking, the assent of the vital being, the will to open and make plastic the physical consciousness and nature; rejection of the movements of the lower nature — rejection of the mind's ideas, opinions, preferences, habits, constructions, so that the true knowledge may find free room in a silent mind, — rejection of the vital nature's desires, demands, cravings, sensations, passions, selfishness, pride, arrogance, lust, greed, jealousy, envy, hostility to the Truth, so that the true power and joy may pour from above into a calm, large, strong and consecrated vital being, — rejection of the physical nature's stupidity, doubt, disbelief, obscurity, obstinacy, pettiness, laziness, unwillingness to change, tamas, so that the true stability of Light, Power, Ananda may establish itself in a body growing always more divine; surrender of oneself and all one is and has and every plane of the consciousness and every movement to the Divine and the Shakti.



In proportion as the surrender and self-consecration progress the Sadhaka becomes conscious of the Divine Shakti doing the Sadhana, pouring into him more and more of herself, founding in him the freedom and perfection of the Divine Nature. The more this conscious process replaces his own effort, the more rapid and true becomes his progress. But it cannot completely replace the necessity of personal effort until the surrender and consecration are pure and complete from top to bottom.

Note that a tamasic surrender refusing to fulfil the conditions and calling on God to do everything and save one all the trouble and struggle is a deception and does not lead to freedom and perfection.

III

To walk through life armoured against all fear, peril and disaster, only two things are needed, two that go always together — the Grace of the Divine Mother and on your side an inner state made up of faith, sincerity and surrender. Let your faith be pure, candid and perfect. An egoistic faith in the mental and vital being tainted by ambition, pride, vanity, mental arrogance, vital self-will, personal demand, desire for the petty satisfactions of the lower nature is a low and smoke-obscured flame that cannot burn upwards to heaven. Regard your life as given you only for the divine work and to help in the divine manifestation. Desire nothing but the purity, force, light, wideness, calm, Ananda of the divine consciousness and its insistence to transform and perfect your mind, life and body. Ask for nothing but the divine, spiritual and supramental Truth, its realisation on earth and in you and in all who are called and chosen and the conditions needed for its creation and its victory over all opposing forces.

Let your sincerity and surrender be genuine and entire. When you give yourself, give completely, without demand, without condition, without reservation so that all in you shall belong to the Divine Mother and nothing be left to the ego or given to any other power.

The more complete your faith, sincerity and surrender, the more will grace and protection be with you. And when the grace and protection of the Divine Mother are with you, what is there that can touch you or whom need you fear? A little of it even will carry you through all difficulties, obstacles and dangers; surrounded by its full presence you can go securely on your way because it is hers, careless of all menace, unaffected by any hostility however powerful, whether from this world or from worlds invisible. Its touch can turn difficulties into opportunities, failure into success and weakness into unfaltering strength. For

the grace of the Divine Mother is the sanction of the Supreme and now or tomorrow its effect is sure, a thing decreed, inevitable and irresistible.

IV

Money is the visible sign of a universal force, and this force in its manifestation on earth works on the vital and physical planes and is indispensable to the fullness of the outer life. In its origin and its true action it belongs to the Divine. But like other powers of the Divine it is delegated here and in the ignorance of the lower Nature can be usurped for the uses of the ego or held by Asuric influences and perverted to their purpose. This is indeed one of the three forces—power, wealth, sex—that have the strongest attraction for the human ego and the Asura and are most generally misheld and misused by those who retain them. The seekers or keepers of wealth are more often possessed rather than its possessors; few escape entirely a certain distorting influence stamped on it by its long seizure and perversion by the Asura. For this reason most spiritual disciplines insist on a complete self-control, detachment and renunciation of all bondage to wealth and of all personal and egoistic desire for its possession. Some even put a ban on money and riches and proclaim poverty and bareness of life as the only spiritual condition. But this is an error; it leaves the power in the hands of the hostile forces. To reconquer it for the Divine to whom it belongs and use it divinely for the divine life is the supramental way for the Sadhaka.

You must neither turn with an ascetic shrinking from the money power, the means it gives and the objects it brings, nor cherish a rajasic attachment to them or a spirit of enslaving self-indulgence in their gratifications. Regard wealth simply as a power to be won back for the Mother and placed at her service.

All wealth belongs to the Divine and those who hold it are trustees, not possessors. It is with them today, tomorrow it may be elsewhere. All depends on the way they discharge their trust while it is with them, in what spirit, with what consciousness in their use of it, to what purpose.

In your personal use of money look on all you have or get or bring as the Mother's. Make no demand but accept what you receive from her and use it for the purposes for which it is given to you. Be entirely selfless, entirely scrupulous, exact, careful in detail, a good trustee; always consider that it is her possessions and not your own that you are handling. On the other hand, what you receive for her, lay religiously before her; turn nothing to your own or anybody else's purpose.

Do not look up to men because of their riches or allow yourself to be impressed by the show, the power or the influence. When you ask for the Mother, you must feel that it is she who is demanding through you a very little of what belongs to her and the man from whom you ask will be judged by his response.

If you are free from the money-taint but without any ascetic withdrawal, you will have a greater power to command the money-force for the divine work. Equality of mind, absence of demand and the full dedication of all you possess and receive and all your power of acquisition to the Divine Shakti and her work are the signs of this freedom. Any perturbation of mind with regard to money and its use, any claim, any grudging is a sure index of some imperfection or bondage.

The ideal Sadhaka in this kind is one who if required to live poorly can so live and no sense of want will affect him or interfere with the full inner play of the divine consciousness, and if he is required to live richly, can so live and never for a moment fall into desire or attachment to his wealth or to the things that he uses or servitude to self-indulgence or a weak bondage to the habits that the possession of riches creates. The divine Will is all for him and the divine Ananda.

In the supramental creation the money-force has to be restored to the Divine Power and used for a true and beautiful and harmonious equipment and ordering of a new divinised vital and physical existence in whatever way the Divine Mother herself decides in her creative vision. But first it must be conquered back for her and those will be strongest for the conquest who are in this part of their nature strong and large and free from ego and surrendered without any claim or withholding or hesitation, pure and powerful channels for the Supreme Puissance.

V

If you want to be a true doer of divine works, your first aim must be to be totally free from all desire and self-regarding ego. All your life must be an offering and a sacrifice to the Supreme; your only object in action shall be to serve, to receive, to fulfil, to become a manifesting instrument of the Divine Shakti in her works. You must grow in the divine consciousness till there is no difference between your will and hers, no motive except her impulsion in you, no action that is not her conscious action in you and through you.

Until you are capable of this complete dynamic identification, you have to regard yourself as a soul and body created for her service, one who does all for her sake. Even if the idea of the separate worker is strong in you and you feel that it is you who do the act, yet it must be done for her. All stress of egoistic choice, all hankering after personal profit, all stipulation of self-regarding desire must be extirpated from the nature. There must be no demand for fruit and no seeking for reward; the only fruit for you is the pleasure of the Divine Mother and the fulfilment of her work, your only reward a constant progression in divine consciousness and calm and strength and bliss. The joy of service and the joy of inner growth through works is the sufficient recompense of the selfless worker.

But a time will come when you will feel more and more that you are the instrument and not the worker. For first by the force of your devotion your contact with the Divine Mother will become so intimate that at all times you will have only to concentrate and to put everything into her hands to have her present guidance, her direct command or impulse, the sure indication of the thing to be done and the way to do it and the result. And afterwards you will realise that the divine Shakti not only inspires and guides, but initiates and carries out your works; all your movements are originated by her, all your powers are

hers, mind, life and body are conscious and joyful instruments of her action, means for her play, moulds for her manifestation in the physical universe. There can be no more happy condition than this union and dependence; for this step carries you back beyond the border-line from the life of stress and suffering in the ignorance into the truth of your spiritual being, into its deep peace and its intense Ananda.

While this transformation is being done it is more than ever necessary to keep yourself free from all taint of the perversions of the ego. Let no demand or insistence creep in to stain the purity of the self-giving and the sacrifice. There must be no attachment to the work or the result, no laying down of conditions, no claim to possess the Power that should possess you, no pride of the instrument, no vanity or arrogance. Nothing in the mind or in the vital or physical parts should be suffered to distort to its own use or seize for its own personal and separate satisfaction the greatness of the forces that are acting through you. Let your faith, your sincerity, your purity of aspiration be absolute and pervasive of all the planes and layers of the being; then every disturbing element and distorting influence will progressively fall away from your nature.

The last stage of this perfection will come when you are completely identified with the Divine Mother and feel yourself to be no longer another and separate being, instrument, servant or worker but truly a child and eternal portion of her consciousness and force. Always she will be in you and you in her; it will be your constant, simple and natural experience that all your thought and seeing and action, your very breathing and moving come from her and are hers. You will know and see and feel that you are a person and power formed by her out of herself, put out from her for the play and yet always safe in her, being of her being, consciousness of her consciousness, force of her force, ananda of her Ananda. When this condition is entire and her supramental energies can freely move you, then you will be perfect in divine works; knowledge, will, action will become sure, simple, luminous, spontaneous, flawless, an outflow from the Supreme, a divine movement of the Eternal.

VI

The four Powers of the Mother are four of her outstanding Personalities, portions and embodiments of her divinity through whom she acts on her creatures, orders and harmonises her creations in the worlds and directs the working out of her thousand forces. For the Mother is one but she comes before us with differing aspects; many are her powers and personalities, many her emanations and Vibhutis that do her work in the universe. The One whom we adore as the Mother is the divine Conscious Force that dominates all existence, one and yet so many-sided that to follow her movement is impossible even for the quickest mind and for the freest and most vast intelligence. The Mother is the consciousness and force of the Supreme and far above all she creates. But something of her ways can be seen and felt through her embodiments and the more seizable because more defined and limited temperament and action of the goddess forms in whom she consents to be manifest to her creatures.

There are three ways of being of the Mother of which you can become aware when you enter into touch of oneness with the Conscious Force that upholds us and the universe. Transcendent, the original supreme Shakti, she stands above the worlds and links the creation to the ever unmanifest mystery of the Supreme. Universal, the cosmic Mahashakti, she creates all these beings and contains and enters, supports and conducts all these million processes and forces. Individual, she embodies the power of these two vaster ways of her existence, makes them living and near to us and mediates between the human personality and the divine Nature.

The one original transcendent Shakti, the Mother stands above all the worlds and bears in her eternal consciousness the Supreme Divine. Alone, she harbours the absolute Power and the ineffable Presence; containing or calling the Truths that have to

be manifested, she brings them down from the Mystery in which they were hidden into the light of her infinite consciousness and gives them a form of force in her omnipotent power and her boundless life and a body in the universe. The Supreme is manifest in her for ever as the everlasting Sachchidananda, manifested through her in the worlds as the one and dual consciousness of Ishwara-Shakti and the dual principle of Purusha-Prakriti, embodied by her in the Worlds and the Planes and the Gods and their Energies and figured because of her as all that is in the known worlds and in unknown others. All is her play with the Supreme; all is her manifestation of the mysteries of the Eternal, the miracles of the Infinite. All is she, for all are parcel and portion of the divine Conscious-Force. Nothing can be here or elsewhere but what she decides and the Supreme sanctions; nothing can take shape except what she moved by the Supreme perceives and forms after casting it into seed in her creating Ananda.

The Mahashakti, the universal Mother, works out whatever is transmitted by her transcendent consciousness from the Supreme and enters into the worlds that she has made; her presence fills and supports them with the divine spirit and the divine all-sustaining force and delight without which they could not exist. That which we call Nature or Prakriti is only her most outward executive aspect; she marshals and arranges the harmony of her forces and processes, impels the operations of Nature and moves among them secret or manifest in all that can be seen or experienced or put into motion of life. Each of the worlds is nothing but one play of the Mahashakti of that system of worlds or universe, who is there as the cosmic Soul and Personality of the transcendent Mother. Each is something that she has seen in her vision, gathered into her heart of beauty and power and created in her Ananda.

But there are many planes of her creation, many steps of the Divine Shakti. At the summit of this manifestation of which we are a part there are worlds of infinite existence, consciousness, force and bliss over which the Mother stands as the unveiled eternal Power. All beings there live and move in an ineffable completeness and unalterable oneness, because she carries them

safe in her arms for ever. Nearer to us are the worlds of a perfect supralental creation in which the Mother is the supralental Mahashakti, a Power of divine omniscient Will and omnipotent Knowledge always apparent in its unfailing works and spontaneously perfect in every process. There all movements are the steps of the Truth; there all beings are souls and powers and bodies of the divine Light; there all experiences are seas and floods and waves of an intense and absolute Ananda. But here where we dwell are the worlds of the Ignorance, worlds of mind and life and body separated in consciousness from their source, of which this earth is a significant centre and its evolution a crucial process. This too with all its obscurity and struggle and imperfection is upheld by the Universal Mother; this too is impelled and guided to its secret aim by the Mahashakti.

The Mother as the Mahashakti of this triple world of the Ignorance stands in an intermediate plane between the supralental Light, the Truth life, the Truth creation which has to be brought down here and this mounting and descending hierarchy of planes of consciousness that like a double ladder lapse into the nescience of Matter and climb back again through the flowering of life and soul and mind into the infinity of the Spirit. Determining all that shall be in this universe and in the terrestrial evolution by what she sees and feels and pours from her, she stands there above the Gods and all her Powers and Personalities are put out in front of her for the action and she sends down emanations of them into these lower worlds to intervene, to govern, to battle and conquer, to lead and turn their cycles, to direct the total and the individual lines of their forces. These Emanations are the many divine forms and personalities in which men have worshipped her under different names throughout the ages. But also she prepares and shapes through these Powers and their emanations the minds and bodies of her Vibhutis, even as she prepares and shapes minds and bodies for the Vibhutis of the Ishwara, that she may manifest in the physical world and in the disguise of the human consciousness some ray of her power and quality and presence. All the scenes of the earth-play have been like a drama arranged and planned and staged by her with the

cosmic Gods for her assistants and herself as a veiled actor.

The Mother not only governs all from above but she descends into this lesser triple universe. Impersonally, all things here, even the movements of the Ignorance, are herself in veiled power and her creations in diminished substance, her Nature-body and Nature-force, and they exist because, moved by the mysterious fiat of the Supreme to work out something that was there in the possibilities of the Infinite, she has consented to the great sacrifice and has put on like a mask the soul and forms of the Ignorance. But personally too she has stooped to descend here into the Darkness that she may lead it to the Light, into the Falsehood and Error that she may convert it to the Truth, into this Death that she may turn it to godlike Life, into this world-pain and its obstinate sorrow and suffering that she may end it in the transforming ecstasy of her sublime Ananda. In her deep and great love for her children she has consented to put on herself the cloak of this obscurity, condescended to bear the attacks and torturing influences of the powers of the Darkness and the Falsehood, borne to pass through the portals of the birth that is a death, taken upon herself the pangs and sorrows and sufferings of the creation, since it seemed that thus alone could it be lifted to the Light and Joy and Truth and eternal Life. This is the great sacrifice called sometimes the sacrifice of the Purusha, but much more deeply the holocaust of Prakriti, the sacrifice of the Divine Mother.

Four great Aspects of the Mother, four of her leading Powers and Personalities have stood in front in her guidance of this universe and in her dealings with the terrestrial play. One is her personality of calm wideness and comprehending wisdom and tranquil benignity and inexhaustible compassion and sovereign and surpassing majesty and all-ruling greatness. Another embodies her power of splendid strength and irresistible passion, her warrior mood, her overwhelming will, her impetuous swiftness and world-shaking force. A third is vivid and sweet and wonderful with her deep secret of beauty and harmony and fine rhythm, her intricate and subtle opulence, her compelling attraction and captivating grace. The fourth is equipped with her

close and profound capacity of intimate knowledge and careful flawless work and quiet and exact perfection in all things. Wisdom, Strength, Harmony, Perfection are their several attributes and it is these powers that they bring with them into the world, manifest in a human disguise in their Vibhutis and shall find in the divine degree of their ascension in those who can open their earthly nature to the direct and living influence of the Mother. To the four we give the four great names, Maheshwari, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi, Mahasaraswati.

Imperial MAHESHWARI is seated in the wideness above the thinking mind and will and sublimates and greatness them into wisdom and largeness or floods with a splendour beyond them. For she is the mighty and wise One who opens us to the supramental infinities and the cosmic vastness, to the grandeur of the supreme Light, to a treasure-house of miraculous knowledge, to the measureless movement of the Mother's eternal forces. Tranquil is she and wonderful, great and calm for ever. Nothing can move her because all wisdom is in her; nothing is hidden from her that she chooses to know; she comprehends all things and all beings and their nature and what moves them and the law of the world and its times and how all was and is and must be. A strength is in her that meets everything and masters and none can prevail in the end against her vast intangible wisdom and high tranquil power. Equal, patient and unalterable in her will she deals with men according to their nature and with things and happenings according to their force and the truth that is in them. Partiality she has none, but she follows the decrees of the Supreme and some she raises up and some she casts down or puts away from her into the darkness. To the wise she gives a greater and more luminous wisdom; those that have vision she admits to her counsels; on the hostile she imposes the consequence of their hostility; the ignorant and foolish she leads according to their blindness. In each man she answers and handles the different elements of his nature according to their need and their urge and the return they call for, puts on them the required pressure or leaves them to their cherished liberty to prosper in the ways of the Ignorance or to perish. For she is above all, bound by nothing,

attached to nothing in the universe. Yet has she more than any other the heart of the universal Mother. For her compassion is endless and inexhaustible; all are to her eyes her children and portions of the One, even the Asura and Rakshasa and Pisacha and those that are revolted and hostile. Even her rejections are only a postponement, even her punishments are a grace. But her compassion does not blind her wisdom or turn her action from the course decreed; for the Truth of things is her one concern, knowledge her centre of power and to build our soul and our nature into the divine Truth her mission and her labour.

MAHAKALI is of another nature. Not wideness but height, not wisdom but force and strength are her peculiar power. There is in her an overwhelming intensity, a mighty passion of force to achieve, a divine violence rushing to shatter every limit and obstacle. All her divinity leaps out in a splendour of tempestuous action; she is there for swiftness, for the immediately effective process, the rapid and direct stroke, the frontal assault that carries everything before it. Terrible is her face to the Asura, dangerous and ruthless her mood against the haters of the Divine; for she is the Warrior of the Worlds who never shrinks from the battle. Intolerant of imperfection, she deals roughly with all in man that is unwilling and she is severe to all that is obstinately ignorant and obscure; her wrath is immediate and dire against treachery and falsehood and malignity, ill-will is smitten at once by her scourge. Indifference, negligence and sloth in the divine work she cannot bear and she smites awake at once with sharp pain, if need be, the untimely slumberer and the loiterer. The impulses that are swift and straight and frank, the movements that are unreserved and absolute, the aspiration that mounts in flame are the motion of Mahakali. Her spirit is timeless, her vision and will are high and far-reaching like the flight of an eagle, her feet are rapid on the upward way and her hands are outstretched to strike and to succour. For she too is the Mother and her love is as intense as her wrath and she has a deep and passionate kindness. When she is allowed to intervene in her strength, then in one moment are broken like things without consistence the obstacles that immobilise or the enemies that assail the seeker.

If her anger is dreadful to the hostile and the vehemence of her pressure painful to the weak and timid, she is loved and worshipped by the great, the strong and the noble; for they feel that her blows beat what is rebellious in their material into strength and perfect truth, hammer straight what is wry and perverse and expel what is impure or defective. But for her what is done in a day might have taken centuries; without her Ananda might be wide and grave or soft and sweet and beautiful but would lose the flaming joy of its most absolute intensities. To knowledge she gives a conquering might, brings to beauty and harmony a high and mounting movement and imparts to the slow and difficult labour after perfection an impetus that multiplies the power and shortens the long way. Nothing can satisfy her that falls short of the supreme ecstasies, the highest heights, the noblest aims, the largest vistas. Therefore with her is the victorious force of the Divine and it is by grace of her fire and passion and speed if the great achievement can be done now rather than hereafter.

Wisdom and Force are not the only manifestations of the supreme Mother; there is a subtler mystery of her nature and without it Wisdom and Force would be incomplete things and without it perfection would not be perfect. Above them is the miracle of eternal beauty, an unseizable secret of divine harmonies, the compelling magic of an irresistible universal charm and attraction that draws and holds things and forces and beings together and obliges them to meet and unite that a hidden Ananda may play from behind the veil and make of them its rhythms and its figures. This is the power of MAHALAKSHMI and there is no aspect of the Divine Shakti more attractive to the heart of embodied beings. Maheshwari can appear too calm and great and distant for the littleness of earthly nature to approach or contain her, Mahakali too swift and formidable for its weakness to bear; but all turn with joy and longing to Mahalakshmi. For she throws the spell of the intoxicating sweetness of the Divine: to be close to her is a profound happiness and to feel her within the heart is to make existence a rapture and a marvel; grace and charm and tenderness flow out from her like light from the sun and wherever she fixes her wonderful gaze or lets fall the

loveliness of her smile, the soul is seized and made captive and plunged into the depths of an unfathomable bliss. Magnetic is the touch of her hands and their occult and delicate influence refines mind and life and body and where she presses her feet course miraculous streams of an entrancing Ananda.

And yet it is not easy to meet the demand of this enchanting Power or to keep her presence. Harmony and beauty of the mind and soul, harmony and beauty of the thoughts and feelings, harmony and beauty in every outward act and movement, harmony and beauty of the life and surroundings, this is the demand of Mahalakshmi. Where there is affinity to the rhythms of the secret world-bliss and response to the call of the All-Beautiful and concord and unity and the glad flow of many lives turned towards the Divine, in that atmosphere she consents to abide. But all that is ugly and mean and base, all that is poor and sordid and squalid, all that is brutal and coarse repels her advent. Where love and beauty are not or are reluctant to be born, she does not come; where they are mixed and disfigured with baser things, she turns soon to depart or cares little to pour her riches. If she finds herself in men's hearts surrounded with selfishness and hatred and jealousy and malignance and envy and strife, if treachery and greed and ingratitude are mixed in the sacred chalice, if grossness of passion and unrefined desire degrade devotion, in such hearts the gracious and beautiful Goddess will not linger. A divine disgust seizes upon her and she withdraws, for she is not one who insists or strives; or, veiling her face, she waits for this bitter and poisonous devil's stuff to be rejected and disappear before she will found anew her happy influence. Ascetic bareness and harshness are not pleasing to her nor the suppression of the heart's deeper emotions and the rigid repression of the soul's and the life's parts of beauty. For it is through love and beauty that she lays on men the yoke of the Divine. Life is turned in her supreme creations into a rich work of celestial art and all existence into a poem of sacred delight; the world's riches are brought together and concerted for a supreme order and even the simplest and commonest things are made wonderful by her intuition of unity and the breath of her spirit.

Admitted to the heart she lifts wisdom to pinnacles of wonder and reveals to it the mystic secrets of the ecstasy that surpasses all knowledge, meets devotion with the passionate attraction of the Divine, teaches to strength and force the rhythm that keeps the might of their acts harmonious and in measure and casts on perfection the charm that makes it endure for ever.

MAHASARASWATI is the Mother's Power of Work and her spirit of perfection and order. The youngest of the Four, she is the most skilful in executive faculty and the nearest to physical Nature. Maheshwari lays down the large lines of the world-forces, Mahakali drives their energy and impetus, Mahalakshmi discovers their rhythms and measures, but Mahasaraswati presides over their detail of organisation and execution, relation of parts and effective combination of forces and unfailing exactitude of result and fulfilment. The science and craft and technique of things are Mahasaraswati's province. Always she holds in her nature and can give to those whom she has chosen the intimate and precise knowledge, the subtlety and patience, the accuracy of intuitive mind and conscious hand and discerning eye of the perfect worker. This Power is the strong, the tireless, the careful and efficient builder, organiser, administrator, technician, artisan and classifier of the worlds. When she takes up the transformation and new-building of the nature, her action is laborious and minute and often seems to our impatience slow and interminable, but it is persistent, integral and flawless. For the will in her works is scrupulous, unsleeping, indefatigable; leaning over us she notes and touches every little detail, finds out every minute defect, gap, twist or incompleteness, considers and weighs accurately all that has been done and all that remains still to be done hereafter. Nothing is too small or apparently trivial for her attention; nothing however impalpable or disguised or latent can escape her. Moulding and remoulding she labours each part till it has attained its true form, is put in its exact place in the whole and fulfils its precise purpose. In her constant and diligent arrangement and rearrangement of things her eye is on all needs at once and the way to meet them and her intuition knows what is to be chosen and what rejected and successfully

determines the right instrument, the right time, the right conditions and the right process. Carelessness and negligence and indolence she abhors; all scamped and hasty and shuffling work, all clumsiness and *à peu près* and misfire, all false adaptation and misuse of instruments and faculties and leaving of things undone or half done is offensive and foreign to her temper. When her work is finished, nothing has been forgotten, no part has been misplaced or omitted or left in a faulty condition; all is solid, accurate, complete, admirable. Nothing short of a perfect perfection satisfies her and she is ready to face an eternity of toil if that is needed for the fullness of her creation. Therefore of all the Mother's powers she is the most long-suffering with man and his thousand imperfections. Kind, smiling, close and helpful, not easily turned away or discouraged, insistent even after repeated failure, her hand sustains our every step on condition that we are single in our will and straightforward and sincere; for a double mind she will not tolerate and her revealing irony is merciless to drama and histrionics and self-deceit and pretence. A mother to our wants, a friend in our difficulties, a persistent and tranquil counsellor and mentor, chasing away with her radiant smile the clouds of gloom and fretfulness and depression, reminding always of the ever-present help, pointing to the eternal sunshine, she is firm, quiet and persevering in the deep and continuous urge that drives us towards the integrality of the higher nature. All the work of the other Powers leans on her for its completeness; for she assures the material foundation, elaborates the stuff of detail and erects and rivets the armour of the structure.

There are other great Personalities of the Divine Mother, but they were more difficult to bring down and have not stood out in front with so much prominence in the evolution of the earth-spirit. There are among them Presences indispensable for the supramental realisation,—most of all one who is her Personality of that mysterious and powerful ecstasy and Ananda which flows from a supreme divine Love, the Ananda that alone can heal the gulf between the highest heights of the supramental spirit and the lowest abysses of Matter, the Ananda that holds the key of a wonderful divinest Life and even now supports from

its secracies the work of all the other Powers of the universe. But human nature bounded, egoistic and obscure is inapt to receive these great Presences or to support their mighty action. Only when the Four have founded their harmony and freedom of movement in the transformed mind and life and body, can those other rarer Powers manifest in the earth movement and the supramental action become possible. For when her Personalities are all gathered in her and manifested and their separate working has been turned into a harmonious unity and they rise in her to their supramental godheads, then is the Mother revealed as the supramental Mahashakti and brings pouring down her luminous transcendences from their ineffable ether. Then can human nature change into dynamic divine nature because all the elemental lines of the supramental Truth-consciousness and Truth-force are strung together and the harp of life is fitted for the rhythms of the Eternal.

If you desire this transformation, put yourself in the hands of the Mother and her Powers without cavil or resistance and let her do unhindered her work within you. Three things you must have, consciousness, plasticity, unreserved surrender. For you must be conscious in your mind and soul and heart and life and the very cells of your body, aware of the Mother and her Powers and their working; for although she can and does work in you even in your obscurity and your unconscious parts and moments, it is not the same thing as when you are in an awakened and living communion with her. All your nature must be plastic to her touch,—not questioning as the self-sufficient ignorant mind questions and doubts and disputes and is the enemy of its enlightenment and change; not insisting on its own movements as the vital in man insists and persistently opposes its refractory desires and ill-will to every divine influence; not obstructing and entrenched in incapacity, inertia and tamas as man's physical consciousness obstructs and clinging to its pleasure in smallness and darkness cries out against each touch that disturbs its soulless routine or its dull sloth or its torpid slumber. The unreserved surrender of your inner and outer being will bring this plasticity into all the parts of your nature; consciousness will

awaken everywhere in you by constant openness to the Wisdom and Light, the Force, the Harmony and Beauty, the Perfection that come flowing down from above. Even the body will awake and unite at last its consciousness subliminal no longer to the supramental superconscious Force, feel all her powers permeating from above and below and around it and thrill to a supreme Love and Ananda.

But be on your guard and do not try to understand and judge the Divine Mother by your little earthly mind that loves to subject even the things that are beyond it to its own norms and standards, its narrow reasonings and erring impressions, its bottomless aggressive ignorance and its petty self-confident knowledge. The human mind shut in the prison of its half-lit obscurity cannot follow the many-sided freedom of the steps of the Divine Shakti. The rapidity and complexity of her vision and action outrun its stumbling comprehension; the measures of her movement are not its measures. Bewildered by the swift alternation of her many different personalities, her making of rhythms and her breaking of rhythms, her accelerations of speed and her retardations, her varied ways of dealing with the problem of one and of another, her taking up and dropping now of this line and now of that one and her gathering of them together, it will not recognise the way of the Supreme Power when it is circling and sweeping upwards through the maze of the Ignorance to a supernal Light. Open rather your soul to her and be content to feel her with the psychic nature and see her with the psychic vision that alone make a straight response to the Truth. Then the Mother herself will enlighten by their psychic elements your mind and heart and life and physical consciousness and reveal to them too her ways and her nature.

Avoid also the error of the ignorant mind's demand on the Divine Power to act always according to our crude surface notions of omniscience and omnipotence. For our mind clamours to be impressed at every turn by miraculous power and easy success and dazzling splendour; otherwise it cannot believe that here is the Divine. The Mother is dealing with the Ignorance in the fields of the Ignorance; she has descended there and is not

all above. Partly she veils and partly she unveils her knowledge and her power, often holds them back from her instruments and personalities and follows that she may transform them the way of the seeking mind, the way of the aspiring psychic, the way of the battling vital, the way of the imprisoned and suffering physical nature. There are conditions that have been laid down by a Supreme Will, there are many tangled knots that have to be loosened and cannot be cut abruptly asunder. The Asura and Rakshasa hold this evolving earthly nature and have to be met and conquered on their own terms in their own long-conquered fief and province; the human in us has to be led and prepared to transcend its limits and is too weak and obscure to be lifted up suddenly to a form far beyond it. The Divine Consciousness and Force are there and do at each moment the thing that is needed in the conditions of the labour, take always the step that is decreed and shape in the midst of imperfection the perfection that is to come. But only when the supermind has descended in you can she deal directly as the supramental Shakti with supramental natures. If you follow your mind, it will not recognise the Mother even when she is manifest before you. Follow your soul and not your mind, your soul that answers to the Truth, not your mind that leaps at appearances; trust the Divine Power and she will free the godlike elements in you and shape all into an expression of Divine Nature.

The supramental change is a thing decreed and inevitable in the evolution of the earth-consciousness; for its upward ascent is not ended and mind is not its last summit. But that the change may arrive, take form and endure, there is needed the call from below with a will to recognise and not deny the Light when it comes, and there is needed the sanction of the Supreme from above. The power that mediates between the sanction and the call is the presence and power of the Divine Mother. The Mother's power and not any human endeavour and tapasya can alone rend the lid and tear the covering and shape the vessel and bring down into this world of obscurity and falsehood and death and suffering Truth and Light and Life divine and the immortal's Ananda.

Part Two

Letters on the Mother

The Mother is always with you. Put your faith in her, remain quiet within and do with that quietude what has to be done. You will become more and more aware of her constant Presence, will feel her action behind yours and the burden of your work will no longer be heavy on you. Sri Aurobindo

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Sri Aurobindo

Final paragraph of a letter written by Sri Aurobindo
to a disciple living outside the Ashram

Section One

The Mother: Individual, Universal, Transcendent

The Mother and the Purpose of Her Embodiment

Who Is the Mother?

Do you not refer to the Mother (our Mother) in your book *The Mother*?

Yes.

Is she not the “Individual” Divine Mother who has embodied “the power of these two vaster ways of her existence”¹ — Transcendent and Universal?

Yes.

Has she not *descended* here (amongst us) into the Darkness and Falsehood and Error and Death in her deep and great love for us?

Yes.

There are many who hold the view that she was human but now embodies the Divine Mother and her *Prayers*, they say, explain this view. But to my mental conception, to my psychic feeling, she is the Divine Mother who has consented to put on herself the cloak of obscurity and suffering and ignorance so that she can effectively lead us — human beings — to Knowledge and Bliss and Ananda and to Him.

The Divine puts on an appearance of humanity, assumes the outward human nature in order to tread the path and show it to human beings, but does not cease to be the Divine. It is a manifestation that takes place, a manifestation of a growing divine

¹ Sri Aurobindo, *The Mother*, p. 14. Other letters on the book *The Mother* are published in Letters on Himself and on the Ashram, volume 35 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, pp. 102–17.—Ed.

consciousness, not human turning into divine. The Mother was inwardly above the human even in childhood, so the view held by "many" is erroneous.

I also conceive that the Mother's *Prayers* are meant to show us — the aspiring psychic — how to pray to the Divine.

Yes.

17 August 1938

The Mother and the Supramental Descent

Am I right in thinking that the Mother as an individual embodies all the Divine Powers and brings down the Grace more and more to the physical plane . . .

Yes.

and that her embodiment is a chance for the entire physical to change and be transformed?

It is a chance for the earth-consciousness to receive the supramental into it and to undergo first the transformation necessary for that to be possible. Afterwards there will be a farther transformation by the supramental, but the whole earth-consciousness will not be supramentalised — there will be first a new race representing the supermind, as man represents the mind.

The more we open individually to the Mother's Light and Force, the more her power is established in the universal — is it not so?

It is the transforming power that is established — the universal Power is always there.

13 August 1933

*

The Mother has come down to work on the earth, not in another world. The thousand petalled lotus and the plane or world that corresponds to it is only a means of communication between the

Truth and the earth-existence. But it is true that the consciousness of each has to rise to that level if the work on earth is to be successfully done.

1 October 1933

*

I know that all here is unreal. The Mother alone is real.

It is the higher reality that the Mother brings into the world — without it all else is ignorant and false.

3 August 1934

*

The Mother does not work on the sadhak directly from her own plane above, though she can do so if she wants to — she can even supramentalise the world in a day; but in that case the supramental Nature created here would be the same as it is above, and not the earth in Ignorance evolving into the supramental earth, which will not be quite the same in appearance as what the Supermind is.

That is a very important truth.

17 June 1935

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Some people seem to be quite misled in understanding the Mother's status with regard to the higher planes. When they are in these planes or receive something from them, they begin to think that they have reached a great height, and that the higher planes have nothing to do with the Mother. They value them more than they value the Mother! Especially about the Supermind they have such queer notions — that it is something greater than the Mother.

If they have a greater experience or consciousness than the Mother, they should not stay here but go and save the world with it.

18 September 1935

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Is there any difference between the Mother's manifestation and the descent of the supramental?

The Mother comes in order to bring down the supramental and it is the descent which makes her full manifestation here possible.

23 September 1935

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Is the attitude that I am the Brahman not necessary in the Integral Yoga?

It is not enough to transform the whole nature. Otherwise there would be no need of the embodiment. It could be done by simply thinking of oneself as the Brahman. There would be no need of the Mother's presence or the Mother's force.

27 December 1935

Sri Aurobindo's Recognition of the Mother

I believe that on the 24th November 1926 Sri Aurobindo realised that the Mother is the Divine Consciousness and Force.

No. I knew that long before.

2 November 1935

The Mother: Some Events in Her Life

The Mother's Year of Birth

I asked Mother last night to kindly let me know the correct year of her birth. I am waiting to hear from her.

I don't see why.

22 February 1934

*

The reason why I want to know the year of the Mother's birth is, for the moment, only a certain curiosity, though there may be something deeper behind.

Curiosity is hardly a proper motive — people ask these things because they want to gossip about the Mother as about all things and in the same spirit. It is this constant action from the lower human motives of the ordinary consciousness which keeps people from living within and prevents the transformation of the physical nature.

22 February 1934

*

Today something deeper than curiosity has awakened in me. I long to know the year of the Mother's birth in order to keep it as a loving memory in my heart. Everything about her is dear and sweet to me.

You can have the loving memory without knowing the year. At that rate you could insist on the Mother telling you all the details of her private life so that you may have a loving memory of them.

23 February 1934

Early Visions and Experiences

When Ramakrishna was doing sadhana, Mother was on earth physically for the first eight years of her childhood, from 1878

to 1886. Did he know that Mother had come down? He must have had some vision at least of her coming, but we do not read anywhere definitely about it. And when Ramakrishna must have been intensely calling Mother, she must have felt something at that age.

In Mother's childhood's visions she saw myself whom she knew as "Krishna" — she did not see Ramakrishna.

It was not necessary that he should have a vision of her coming down as he was not thinking of the future nor consciously preparing for it. I don't think he had the idea of any incarnation of the Mother.

11 July 1935

*

The Mother is not a disciple of Sri Aurobindo.¹ She has had the same realisation and experience as myself.

The Mother's sadhana started when she was very young. When she was twelve or thirteen, every evening many teachers came to her and taught her various spiritual disciplines. Among them was a dark Asiatic figure. When we first met, she immediately recognised me as the dark Asiatic figure whom she used to see a long time ago. That she should come here and work with me for a common goal was, as it were, a divine dispensation.

The Mother was an adept in the Buddhist yoga and the yoga of the Gita even before she came to India. Her yoga was moving towards a grand synthesis. After this, it was natural that she should come here. She has helped and is helping to give a concrete form to my yoga. This would not have been possible without her co-operation.

One of the two great steps in this yoga is to take refuge in the Mother.²

17 August 1941

¹ This letter was dictated by Sri Aurobindo, who referred to himself in the third person.
— Ed.

² When Sri Aurobindo was asked, on a later occasion, what the second great step is, he replied, "Aspiration of the sadhak for the divine life." — Ed.

Studying Occultism with Max Théon

I should like to know something about Théon: what role has he played in this new manifestation of yours?

Théon was merely the Mother's guru in occultism—he had some idea of the aim to be achieved, but got much of it wrong. Moreover what was true came from his wife and was not originally his.

*

In your letter this morning you say, "There are some who get a complete control in sleep." This sentence evoked a doubt in me: "If ordinary people—Coué's patients, for example—could make their suggestions effective and cure themselves wonderfully, why is the will of people here so weak even when the Divine is here?" My answer was that those people had only a simple objective and not the aim of a complex change of consciousness; there was no pressure from above and no consequent resistance from below.

When I spoke of some, I was thinking not of people in the Asram but of occultists who make such things their main method. The Mother herself was taught to do it by a great occultist under whom she first practised these things. As to Coué, your answer was the right one. Coué's work was on the mental and vital level and to that there is only a very minor opposition from the vital world because it does not seriously endanger their rule.

31 October 1933

Early Occult Experiences

X asked me whether Mother can materialise herself at a distance. Y seems to have said something like that.

Y probably referred to an experience in which the Mother being in Algeria appeared to a circle of friends sitting in Paris and took up a pencil and wrote a few words on a paper. Having satisfied herself that it was possible she did not develop it any farther. That was at a time when she was practising occultism

with Théon in Algeria. Materialisation is possible but it does not happen easily—it demands a very rare and difficult concentration of forces or else an occult process with vital beings behind it such as materialises objects, like the stones that were daily thrown in the Guest House when we were there. In neither case is it a miracle. But to do as you suggest, make it a common or everyday phenomenon, would be hardly practicable and spiritually not useful, as it is not a spiritual force which gives the power but an occult mental-vital force. It would turn the Yoga into a display of occultism, rather than a process of spiritual change.

20 October 1935

*

You have said that the Mother's materialising herself in Paris while she was living in Algeria was not a miracle. What could be called a miracle, then?

A miracle means something without a process or law which gets done by a sort of magical power or feat—at least that is the impression given by the use of the word. This kind of manifestation is not that, it is a thing well-known at least in theory and sometimes successfully accomplished.

21 October 1935

Meeting Jnan Chakrabarti

I never met Chakrabarti personally and know nothing about Krishnaprem's Guru. Chakrabarti's father came here to see me, but even that I had forgotten till the Mother reminded me of it. I know Chakrabarti only through the Mother, but that is better than any personal acquaintance. The Mother met him in Paris when he was there once with his sons on his way to England; it was before the deluge, in pre-war days. She meditated with him and they were able inwardly to meet each other with a brief but living spiritual interchange. He told her that he had an extraordinary meditation which was entirely due to her, and she was aware of his state of consciousness and discovered in

him a remarkable spiritual realisation and a considerable insight on the inner plane. It was the realisation of the Gita or part of it which he had built up in himself, peace, equanimity, the sense of the Divine within, and the atmosphere of peace was so strongly formed and living and real in him that he could convey it to others. On the other hand, he was externally a very worldly man, accepting the not very exalted outward personal life and surroundings he had as the milieu given him and not in the least wishing to change it. It was his theory that this was the teaching of the Gita — to feel Krishna within, to have the inner spiritual life and realisation,— the rest was the Lila and could be left as it was unless or until the Divine himself in the automatic movement of his play chose to change it. This explains the double character of the impression he conveyed to others, which so much surprised you. Those who had themselves some development or aspired to it could, I suppose, feel the sadhak in him; others might see only the worldly man, able, strong, rich, social, successful, accepting, even perhaps drawing to himself enjoyment of riches and power. Others felt both sides, but could understand neither, like your friend in Geneva. Your account of him interested myself and the Mother greatly; it was so evidently the same man, even if the external facts were not there to identify the husband of Krishnaprem's Guru with the spiritual-worldly Chakrabarti of Paris. Not a complete spiritual hero, no doubt, but a remarkable sadhak all the same.

1 April 1932

Arrival in Pondicherry

In *Prayers and Meditations*, the Mother mentions her seeing you first on the 29th March 1914; in other words she met you when she first came to Pondicherry. How is it then that the 24th April 1920 is considered to be the day on which Mother saw you first?

The 24th April is the day on which Mother came from Japan to Pondicherry finally — not the day of her first seeing me. On the 29th March she came first from France, that visit lasting till February of the next year.

19 March 1936

Some Occult and Spiritual Experiences

I have been wondering whether the Mother has been able to establish a direct connection with Mars or any other far-off planet which is probably habitable and inhabited.

A long time ago Mother was going everywhere in the subtle body but she found it of a very secondary interest. Our attention must be fixed on the earth because our work is here. Besides, the earth is a concentration of all the other worlds and one can touch them by touching something corresponding in the earth-atmosphere.

13 January 1934

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Why do we feel that the Mother is experiencing this or that?
Has she still to go on experiencing?

Experiencing what? She has her own experiences in bringing down the things that have to be brought down—but what the sadhaks experience she had long ago. The Divine does the sadhana first for the world and then in others. 3 January 1935

*

I am afraid I don't know much about Narad. Mother once saw him standing between the Overmind and Supermind where they join as if that was his highest station. But he has his action on the lower plane also—only I don't quite know what it is. In the Puranic tales pure love and Bhakti on the one hand and, on the other hand, a pleasure in making human beings quarrel seem to be his salient characteristics. 5 May 1935

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Yesterday evening I went to bed at 9.30. When I lay down, suddenly my heart stopped for a second and I felt a shock, as if I had fallen down from up above. Is this some kind of Yogic experience or is it due to some weakness of the heart? (I went to Dr. X, but he found nothing wrong with the heart.)

A feeling like that of the shock and the stopping of the breath for a second and as if of falling down comes to many when the consciousness for a moment or a longer time exteriorises itself (goes up out of the body); the shock comes from the going up of the consciousness or from the return into the body. The Mother used to have that hundreds of times. It is not anything physical (the Doctor, as you say, found nothing). When this movement of the consciousness is more normal, the feeling will probably disappear.

1 October 1935

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If some things are easier to do in samadhi, then is not samadhi a very good state even for this Yoga? But some months ago when I spoke of samadhi, you said something like, "It is not samadhi that is needed but a new consciousness."

Certainly, samadhi is not barred from this Yoga. The fact that the Mother was always entering into it is proof enough of that. What I said then was not a general statement that samadhi is never needed and never helpful, but referred to your then need. Particular statements must not be converted by the mind into exclusive and absolute laws.

10 June 1936

The Mother's Illness in 1931 and Her Temporary Retirement

In the first place why on earth do you put any belief in the "reports circulated in the Asram" and, in the second, why on earth do you allow them to depress you? I thought you knew the value or rather the entire absence of value of this kind of gossip and rumour? What about the "scepticism" which makes you unwilling to believe everything people tell you — why not make a useful use of it in refusing to believe these things? That would be better than to make a useless use of it in doubting the experiences of your own inner being which are a thousand times more reliable than this imaginative chit-chat built upon nothing. If the Mother makes you a communication when you are in your inner consciousness, why not put your faith in that

and not in all this external noise and blather? And who, by the way, told you that the Mother is seeing those for whom she has love and confidence and that for others, like yourself, she has no love and confidence? The Mother has been "seeing" nobody and even now and for some time to come all visits and talk must be refused until she is stronger. Certain people come here for their usual work, or to do necessary things, or to bring food or letters etc. (dealt with by me, not by the Mother!), but the Mother has not been wasting her strength in receiving them or in chatting with anybody, I can assure you. I do not think I need say more about all that you have built on what "*they* say"; you ought to see that the foundation is unsubstantial mist and that therefore the structure you have built on it has no right to exist. As for my not answering questions, I have naturally been too busy all these days, but I thought everyone would easily understand that; I did not expect that a theory would be built on it that I was "disappointed", had turned tail and was running away from my work. At any rate, since *they* say so, please reassure them and tell them that such is not the case. For yourself, cheer up and throw sadness to the dogs. How can you be sad when you have such beautiful dreams and messages from the Mother?

2 November 1931

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As for all the rest you write, you should realise that the Mother has had a very severe attack and that she must absolutely husband her forces in view of the strain the 24th November will mean for her. It is quite out of the question for her to begin seeing everybody and receiving them meanwhile — a single morning of that kind of thing would exhaust her altogether. You must remember that for her a physical contact of this kind with others is not a mere social or domestic meeting with a few superficial movements which make no great difference one way or the other. It means for her an interchange, a pouring out of her forces and a receiving of things good, bad and mixed from them which often involves a great labour of adjustment and elimination and, in many cases though not in all, a severe strain on the body. If it

had been only a question of two or three people, it would have been a different matter; but there is the whole Asram here ready to enforce each one his claim the moment she opens her doors. You surely do not want to put all that upon her before she has recovered her health and strength! In the interests of the work itself — the Mother has never cared in the least for her body or her health for its own sake and that indifference has been one reason, though only an outward one, for the damage done — I must insist on her going slowly in the resumption of the work and doing only so much at first as her health can bear. It seems to me that all who care for her ought to feel in the way I do.

12 November 1931

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I had hoped to write shortly, but I have not been able to do so. Therefore, for the moment, since I have promised you this letter in the morning, I can only repeat, on the other matter, that I have not said that you in any degree or the sadhaks generally were the cause of the Mother's illness. To another who wrote something of the kind from the same personal standpoint, I replied that the Mother's illness was due to a strife with universal forces which far overpassed the scope of any individual or group of individuals. What I wrote about the strain thrown on the Mother by the physical contacts was in connection with her resumption of work — and it concerns the conditions under which the work can best be done, so that these forces may not in future have the advantage. Conditions have been particularly arduous in the past owing to the perhaps inevitable development of things, for which I do not hold anyone responsible; but now that the sadhana has come down to the most material plane on which blows can still be given by the adverse forces, it is necessary to make a change which can best be done by a change in the inner attitude of the sadhaks; for that alone now can make — until the decisive descent of the supramental Light and Force — the external conditions easier. But of this I cannot write at the tail end of a letter.

16 November 1931

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I really don't know, my dear X, why you read into what I have written such extravagant things which I certainly never intended to be there. I was trying to explain in one letter why, practically, the Mother could not see anyone until she was strong enough; why should you deduce from it a *principle* intended to govern her action for all the future? I did not at all mean that you were henceforth to be confounded in the mass and never see the Mother in private! I have not, I think, anywhere insisted on a "silent expressionless love" and I cannot even remember having used the phrase. On the contrary, I thought I had made it clear, first, that divine love and psychic love both needed a complete *expression* and that vital and physical love were their necessary complements and were both a part of that complete expression. At any rate, if that was not clear in my letter, I want to make it clear now,—as also that physical darshan etc. are quite legitimate means of expression of the psychic love itself and, *a fortiori*, of the complete love which embraces all the parts of the nature. Therefore, you were never asked to stop seeing the Mother and to give up all personal private contact with her; on the contrary when from some misunderstanding you made the proposal, both the Mother and myself strongly objected and said it would be a wrong movement. How then can you imagine that I wanted you to do anything of the kind? As for killing the vital, that would be in absolute contradiction to the whole principle of the sadhana and we would never dream of asking anybody to do such a thing. We have always said that the vital was absolutely indispensable to any realisation and without it nothing,—neither the Divine nor anything else—could be established in life. All that I ventured to suggest was that the vital movements which lead to trouble and suffering and disturbance should be eliminated or transformed as soon as possible, and even this I would not have stressed in your case if you had not had these violent fits of misery and despondency and what seemed to me unnecessary suffering. You can surely understand that I do not like to see you suffer and, knowing from long experience that it is the cravings and imaginations of the lower vital consciousness that cause men needlessly to torture themselves, wanted you to get free from the

cause. It was not the joy of seeing and talking with the Mother that I wanted you to suppress but this contrary element in you that makes you think she does not love you, does not want to see you or to smile on you, prefers others to yourself, etc., etc. However, I will not insist; I will wait for these disturbances to pass away from you in the due course of the Yoga, as the inner being develops and takes charge of the lower vital nature. . . .

Finally, I will call your attention to what I have said very plainly that *you have in no degree* contributed to bring about the Mother's illness; why then persist in thinking that you have done so or may do it? As for my dark hints about the necessity of a radical change in the sadhana — I spoke, in fact, of a needed change in the *inner* attitude of the *sadhaks*, — it was not a reference to you, but to much that had been going wrong within the atmosphere. You yourself speak of certain persons shaping funnily before the eyes of all, especially during the Mother's illness; there is nothing unreasonable in our wanting to make the inner mistakes to cease which cause such funny shapings to be possible. There is nothing in that that touches you or need alarm you.

I have not yet said anything about the Mother's illness³ because to do so would have needed a long consideration of what those who are at the centre of a work like this have to be, what they have to take upon themselves of human or terrestrial nature and its limitations and how much they have to bear of the difficulties of the transformation. All that is not only difficult in itself for the mind to understand but difficult for me to write in such a way as to bring it home to those who have not our consciousness or our experience. I suppose it has to be written, but I have not yet found the necessary form or the necessary leisure.

19 November 1931

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There will always be doubts, upsettings and confusion of the physical mind and vital, so long as the vital approaches the

³ About your dream I think I have already intimated that you could accept it as true.

Mother from the wrong standpoint,—e.g. if it insists on judging her by her response to its demands and ideas of what she ought to give it. Not to impose one's mind or vital will on the Divine but to receive the Divine's Will and follow it, is the true attitude of sadhana. Not to say "This is my right, want, claim, need, requirement, why do I not get it?", but to give oneself, to surrender and to receive with joy whatever the Divine gives, not grieving or revolting, is the right way. Then what one receives will be the right thing for one. All this you know very well; why do you constantly allow your outer vital to forget it and drag you back towards the old wrong attitude?

As for the Mother drawing back from the old course, routine etc. of her action with regard to the sadhaks, it was a sheer necessity of the work and the sadhana. Everything had got into a wrong groove, was full of mixed movements and a mistaken attitude—and consequently things were going on in the same rajo-tamasic round without any chance of issue, like a squirrel in a cage. The Mother's illness was an emphatic warning that this could not be allowed to go on any longer. A new basis of action and relations has to be built up in which no further sanction will ever seem to be given to the past mistaken movements of the sadhaks which were standing in the way of the descent of the Truth into the physical (material) nature. The basis cannot be built in a day, but the Mother had to stand back, otherwise to build it at all would be impossible.

7 December 1931

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If it is the same part of the vital that was on the right side and has now turned against the Mother, the explanation is very obvious. It gave its adhesion formerly because it thought that by its adhesion it could make her satisfy its desires; finding its desires not indulged, it turns against her. That is the usual vital movement in ordinary man and in ordinary life, and it has no true place in Yoga. It was just the introduction of this attitude into Yoga by the sadhaks and its persistence which has at last made it necessary for the Mother to draw back as she has done. What you have to do is to get these lower parts to understand

that they exist not for themselves but for the Divine and to give their adhesion, without claim or *arrière-pensée* or subterfuge. It is the whole issue at the present moment in the sadhana; for it is only if this is done that the physical consciousness can change and become fit for the descent. Otherwise there will always be these ups and downs in some part of the being at least, delay, confusion and disorder. This is the only true basis for fixity in the true consciousness and for a smooth course in the sadhana.

14 December 1931

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For the rest, it is not a fact that the Mother is retiring more and more or that she has any intention of going inside entirely like me. Your remarks about the privileged few are incomprehensible to me; we are not confiding in a few at the expense of others or telling them what is happening while keeping silent to you. I have, I think, written more to you than to anybody else about these matters and the Mother has not been confiding to anybody anything in that field which has been held back from you. This—about the privileged few—is an old complaint of yours and it has no foundation. If anybody claims to have the special confidence of the Mother, he is making an egoistic claim which is not justifiable. Your real point seems to be about the Mother's not taking up the soup and its accompaniments again. I have told you already why she was compelled by the experience of her illness to stand back from the old routine—which had become for most of the sadhaks a sort of semi-ecclesiastical routine and nothing more. It was because of the mistaken attitude of the sadhaks which had brought about an atmosphere full of movements contrary to the Yoga and likely to lead to disaster—as it had already begun to do. To resume the soup on the old footing would be to bring back the old conditions and end in a repetition of the same round of wrong movements and the same results. The Mother has been slowly and carefully taking steps to renew on another footing her control of things after her illness, but she can take no step which will allow the old dark movements to return—movements of some of which I think

you yourself were beginning to take notice. The next step is for the sadhaks themselves to take; they must make it possible (by their change of attitude, by their resolution to rise on the lower vital and physical plane into the true consciousness) for a union with the Mother on that plane *in the right way and with the right result* to become possible. More I cannot say just now; but I fully intend to be more explicit hereafter — so far as I can without special reference to individuals; for these are things personal to people's Yoga that can often be spoken of only to themselves and not to others.

As for your other questions I shall consider them in another letter; it is too late tonight. It is already 3.30 a.m. I will only say that what happens is for the "best" in this sense only that the end will be a divine victory in spite of all difficulties — that has been and always will be my seeing, my faith and my assurance — if you are willing to accept it from me. But that does not mean that your sadness and depression are necessary to the movement! The sooner they disappear never to recur again, the more joyously the Mother and I will advance on the steep road to the summits, and the easier it will be for you to realise what you want, the complete Bhakti and Ananda.

28 December 1931

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You will say, "But at present the Mother has drawn back and it is the supramental that is to blame, because it is in order to bring down the supramental into matter that she retires." The supramental is not to blame; the supramental could very well have come down into matter under former conditions, if the means created by the Mother for the physical and vital contact had not been vitiated by the wrong attitude, the wrong reactions in the Asram atmosphere. It was not the direct supramental Force that was acting, but an intermediate and preparatory force that carried in it a modified Light derived from the supramental; but this would have been sufficient for the work of opening the way for the highest action, if it had not been for the irruption of these wrong forces on the yet unconquered lower (physical) vital and material plane. The interference was creating

adverse possibilities which could not be allowed to continue. The Mother would not have retired otherwise; and even as it is it is not meant as an abandonment of the field but is only (to borrow a now current phrase from a more external enterprise) a temporary strategic retirement, *reculer pour mieux sauter*. The supramental is therefore not responsible; on the contrary, it is the descent of the supramental that would end all the difficulty.

12 January 1932

Three Aspects of the Mother

Individual, Universal, Transcendent

I am or was under the impression that Mother is the Cosmic and Supracosmic Mahashakti.

I don't quite understand the question. I have explained in *The Mother* that there are three aspects, transcendent, universal and individual, of the Mother.

31 May 1933

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As I see it, there are two Shaktis in the world: the Cosmic Shakti and the individual Shakti—our Mother. I believe it is difficult to remain in direct connection with the Cosmic Shakti, while the individual Shakti is always here before us. I would like to know more about these Shaktis.

There is one divine Force which acts in the universe and in the individual and is also beyond the individual and the universe. The Mother stands for all three, but she is working here in the body to bring down something not yet expressed in this material world so as to transform life here—it is so that you should regard her as the Divine Shakti working here for that purpose. She is that in the body, but in her whole consciousness she is also identified with all the other aspects of the Divine Force.

16 June 1933

The Universal Mother and the Individual Mother

The universal and individual Mother are the same—these are two aspects of the Supreme Mother—but the differentiation is for the multiple action and play. So also one feels the self as one's own self in an individual way but also that there is the same self

individualised in others and all are one.

4 November 1934

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What people mean by the formless *svarūpa* of the Mother,—they mean usually her universal aspect. It is when she is experienced as a universal Existence and Power spread through the universe in which and by which all live. When one feels that Presence one begins to feel a universal peace, light, power, bliss without limits — that is her *svarūpa*. One meets this more often by rising in consciousness above the head where one is liberated from this limited body consciousness and feels oneself also as something wide, calm, one self with all beings — free from passion and disturbance in an eternal peace. But it can be felt through the heart also — then the heart too feels itself wide as the world, pure and blissful, filled with the Mother's presence.

There is also the Mother's personal and individual presence in the heart which brings immediately love and bhakti and the sense of a close intimacy and personal oneness. 9 June 1935

The Mother's Universal Action and Her Embodied Physical Action

Being sincere to the Mother demands communication of all our secret thoughts. There should be no secrecy between the mother and the child. But apart from this, is there any other utility of confessions?

There is the utility of the physical approach to the Mother — the approach of the embodied mind and vital to her embodied Power. In her universal action the Mother acts according to the law of things — in her embodied physical action is the opportunity of a constant Grace, — it is for that that the embodiment takes place.

12 August 1933

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Is there any law of the working of the Mother's Grace? Why does the Mother in her universal action act according to the law of things, but in her embodied physical by constant Grace?

It is the work of the Cosmic Power to maintain the cosmos and the law of the cosmos — transforming it by a slow evolution. The greater transformation comes from the Transcendent above the universe, and it is that transcendent Grace which the embodiment of the Mother is there to bring into action.

13 August 1933

Concentration on the Embodied Mother

When calling down the Force, should I concentrate on the embodied Mother or open to and concentrate on the consciousness of the Universal Mother?

The embodied Mother must be the foundation of the concentration — even when you receive from the universal Consciousness above you, it is from her consciousness that you are receiving.

5 March 1934

The Transcendental Mother and the Embodied Mother

There are many Mothers in the cosmic and spiritual planes who help people in their search for the Divine. Above them, I have read, is the transcendental Mother and above her comes the supreme Mother. X and Y profess to have seen and spoken to the transcendental Mother in her embodied aspect. This is hard to believe.

There are not many Mothers, there is One in many forms. The transcendental is only one aspect of the Mother. I don't know what is meant by the embodied aspect of the transcendental Mother. There is the embodied aspect of the One Mother — what she manifests through it depends on herself. 7 July 1936

The Transcendent Mother and the Higher Hemisphere

"At the summit of this manifestation of which we are a part there are worlds of infinite existence, consciousness, force and bliss over which the Mother stands as the unveiled eternal

Power.”¹ The Transcendent Mother thus stands above the Ananda plane. There are then four steps of the Divine Shakti:

(1) The Transcendent Mahashakti who stands above the Ananda plane and who bears the Supreme Divine in her eternal consciousness.

(2) The Mahashakti immanent in the worlds of Sat-Chit-Ananda where all beings live and move in an ineffable completeness.

(3) The Supramental Mahashakti immanent in the worlds of Supermind.

(4) The Cosmic Mahashakti immanent in the lower hemisphere.

Yes; that is all right. One speaks often however of all above the lower hemisphere as part of the transcendence. This is because the Supermind and Ananda are not manifested in *our* universe at present, but are planes above it. For us the higher hemisphere is पार [para], the Supreme Transcendence is परात्पर [parātpara]. The Sanskrit terms are here clearer than the English.

27 January 1932

*

X asked me the meaning of the term “transcendent”. He also asked if the Supermind is a world of transcendence. So far as I can see, the gradations of the upper hemisphere are, in a sense, the heights of transcendence, with the Mother at the summit.

Yes.

Is it here at the summit that the Mother is the Transcendent Mother and the Divine is the Transcendent Divine?

Yes; but from the point of view of the present triple world of mind, life and body governed by the Overmind (Maya), the Supermind and the supramental Divine (all the upper hemisphere in fact) can be spoken of as Transcendent.

27 January 1932

¹ Sri Aurobindo, *The Mother*, p. 15.

The Eternal Mother

X came to our house. I asked him, “First, one Mother must be born, then another Mother, then another Mother, is it not so? Who is the Mother who was first born before the others were born? How did She come to exist?” He said he did not know, but that Sri Aurobindo and Mother would know and can tell me. Therefore please reply so that I can know everything clearly.

The first mother is the “Mother”—the eternal Mother; she always exists, she has no beginning or end. 4 March 1933

The Mother, the Divine and the Lower Nature

The Consciousness and Force of the Divine

Please explain to me what is meant by the Divine Mother.

The Divine Mother is the Consciousness and Force of the Divine — which is the Mother of all things. 24 June 1933

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You have written in *The Mother* that the Mother is the consciousness and force of the Ishwara, but here my experience is that the Ishwara is the consciousness and force of the Supreme Mother. Could you please make it clear to me?

The Mother is the consciousness and force of the Divine — or, it may be said, she is the Divine in its consciousness-force. The Ishwara as Lord of the Cosmos does come out of the Mother who takes her place beside him as the cosmic Shakti — the cosmic Ishwara is one aspect of the Divine. The experience therefore is correct so far as it goes. 16 November 1934

The Mother in the Tantra

The experience of the Mother being the Supreme is the Tantrik experience — it is one side of the Truth.

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The Tantrics used to invoke Shakti in their sadhana. Was it the same Force and Consciousness that is in the Mother here?

It depends on what they invoked — it was usually some aspect of the Mother that they called.

The Mother in the Gita

The Gita does not speak expressly of the Divine Mother; it speaks always of surrender to the Purushottama — it mentions her only as the Para Prakriti who becomes the Jiva, i.e., who manifests the Divine in the multiplicity and through whom all these worlds are created by the Supreme and he himself descends as the Avatar. The Gita follows the Vedantic tradition which leans entirely on the Ishwara aspect of the Divine and speaks little of the Divine Mother because its object is to draw back from world-nature and arrive at the supreme realisation beyond it; the Tantrik tradition leans on the Shakti or Ishwari aspect and makes all depend on the Divine Mother, because its object is to possess and dominate the world-nature and arrive at the supreme realisation through it. This Yoga insists on both the aspects; the surrender to the Divine Mother is essential, for without it there is no fulfilment of the object of the Yoga.

In regard to the Purushottama the Divine Mother is the supreme divine Consciousness and Power above the worlds, Adya Shakti; she carries the Supreme in herself and manifests the Divine in the worlds through the Akshara and the Kshara. In regard to the Akshara she is the same Para Shakti holding the Purusha immobile in herself and also herself immobile in him at the back of all creation. In regard to the Kshara she is the mobile cosmic Energy manifesting all beings and forces.

18 August 1932

The One and the Supreme Mother

The Shankara knowledge is, as your Guru pointed out, only one side of the Truth; it is the knowledge of the Supreme as realised by the spiritual Mind through the static silence of the pure Existence. It was because he went by this side only that Shankara was unable to accept or explain the origin of the universe except as illusion, a creation of Maya. Unless one realises the Supreme on the dynamic as well as the static side, one cannot experience the true origin of things and the equal reality of the active

Brahman. The Shakti or Power of the Eternal becomes then a power of illusion only and the world becomes incomprehensible, a mystery of cosmic madness, an eternal delirium of the Eternal. Whatever verbal or ideative logic one may bring to support it, this way of seeing the universe explains nothing; it only erects a mental formula of the inexplicable. It is only if you approach the Supreme through his double aspect of Sat and Chit-Shakti, double but inseparable, that the total truth of things can become manifest to the inner experience. The other side was developed by the Shakta Tantrics. The two together, the Vedantic and the Tantric truth unified, can arrive at the integral knowledge.

But philosophically this is what your Guru's teaching comes to and it is obviously a completer truth and a wider knowledge than that given by the Shankara formula. It is already indicated in the Gita's teaching of the Purushottama and the Parashakti (Adya Shakti) who becomes the Jiva and upholds the universe. It is evident that Purushottama and Parashakti are both eternal and are inseparable and one in being; the Parashakti manifests the universe, manifests too the Divine in the universe as the Ishwara and herself appears at his side as the Ishwari Shakti. Or, one may say, it is the Supreme Consciousness-Power of the Supreme that manifests or puts forth itself as Ishwara Ishwari, Atma Atmashakti, Purusha Prakriti, Jiva Jagat. That is the truth in its completeness as far as the mind can formulate it. In the Supermind these questions do not even arise — for it is the mind that creates the problem by erecting oppositions between aspects of the Divine which are not really opposed to each other but are one and inseparable.

This supramental knowledge has not yet been attained, because the supermind itself has not yet been attained, but the reflection of it in intuitive spiritual consciousness is there and that was what was evidently realised in experience by your Guru and what he was expressing in mental terms in the quoted passage. It is possible to go towards this knowledge by beginning with the experience of dissolution in the One, but on condition that you do not stop there, taking it as the highest Truth, but proceed to realise the same One as the supreme Mother, the

Consciousness Force of the Eternal. If on the other hand you approach through the supreme Mother, she will give you the liberation in the silent One also as well as the realisation of the dynamic One and from that it is easier to arrive at the Truth in which both are one and inseparable. At the same time the gulf created by Mind between the Supreme and his Manifestation is bridged and there is no longer a fissure in the truth which makes all incomprehensible. If in the light of this you examine what your Guru taught, you will see that it is the same thing in less metaphysical language.

The Cosmic Divine and the Mother

What is the difference between the cosmic Divine and the Mother?

It is a matter of realisation. In the yoga of the Gita the cosmic Divine is realised as Vasudeva (Krishna). The Vaishnavas realise it as Vishnu, the Shaivas as Shiva. The Tantrics (Shaktas) realise the Devi (Goddess) as the Cosmic and even as the Transcendent Divine.

22 October 1935

The Self, the Divine and the Mother

My heart is aspiring for the Self, the Atman. I feel this Atman as the Lord of my being. I have to do all that I do for its sake, in order to make it the absolute master of myself.

It is the Divine who is the Master—the Self is inactive, it is always a silent wideness supporting all things—that is the static aspect. There is also the dynamic aspect through which the Divine works—behind that is the Mother. You must not lose sight of that, that it is through the Mother that all things are attained.

Again I feel that this Self is not only the Lord of this being, but that I myself am this Self. All these feelings are within myself, not above me; they come down from above.

Essentially everybody is the Self — but take care to avoid the idea that you are the Lord — for that may raise up the ego.

8 October 1934

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After getting your letter [*above*], I was frightened, thinking that all my experiences about the Self were untrue and were misleading influences. Then I thought I would not aspire for the higher opening any more; what is necessary for me now is the growth of the psychic. So I began to concentrate on the heart and have been trying to depend on the psychic strength.

You must not try to stop any opening. My remarks were only meant to keep you on your guard against certain errors that sadhaks often make when the cosmic consciousness opens. If there is the psychic opening with its surrender and the higher opening with its wideness and self-realisation, the two together, there is little danger of any such error.

11 October 1934

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You have told me to keep on my guard against errors. What is your opinion of my recent higher experiences? I used to feel a Consciousness, a vast Wideness which has become each individual. This Consciousness contains all and is in all. I used to feel that each is a part of me since I am that vast Consciousness. I felt that whatever I was doing, I was doing for myself, which is above. Will you tell me what all this means and why you warned me to take care? Was there a chance of making an error?

The experiences were all right — but they give only one side of the Divine Truth, that which one attains through the higher mind — the other side is what one attains through the heart. Above the higher mind these two truths become one. If one realises the silent Atman above, there is no danger, but there is also no transformation, only Moksha, Nirvana. If one realises the cosmic self, dynamic and active, then one realises all as the Self, all as myself, that self as the Divine, etc. This is all true; but the danger is of the ego catching hold of the “my” in that conception

of all as “myself”. For this “myself” is not my personal self but everybody’s self as well as mine. The way to get rid of any such danger is to remember that this Divine is also the Mother, that the personal “I” is a child of the Mother with whom I am one, yet different, her child, servant, instrument. I have said that you should not stop realising the Self or the cosmic consciousness, but should at the same time remember that all this is the Mother.

13 October 1934

The Mother and Self-Realisation

What is remarkable today is that the consciousness is turning more and more towards oneness with the Mother’s Self in the silent peace. I write “Self” simply out of my perception, so I would like to be a little clear about it.

You are seeking for Self-realisation — but what is that Self if not the Mother’s self? There is no other.

29 September 1934

*

As the soul is in direct connection with the Divine, is not our Self also in direct connection with it? Why then does one not feel intimacy with the Mother while realising the Self as one does during the soul-realisation?

The Self has two aspects, passive and active. In the first it is pure silence, wideness, calm, the inactive Brahman — in the second it is the Cosmic Spirit, universal not individual. One can feel in it union or oneness with the Mother. Intimacy is a feeling of the individual, therefore of the psychic being.

12 October 1934

The Mother, the Jivatman and the Soul

In the *Chandi* it is said that the Devi is in everyone in the form of consciousness. This is the Bhagavat Chetana in all beings. In the true state, in the psychic and the Jivatman, it is united, a divine portion. In the fallen state, it is the ego. Is this correct?

I don't understand exactly. Chitshakti or Bhagavat Chetana is the Mother — the Jivatman is a portion of it, the psychic or soul a spark of it. Ego is a perverted reflection of the psychic or the Jivatman. If that is what you mean, it is correct.

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Sometimes I feel as if I am a portion of the Mother come down into the manifestation for her work. As a result, I have to pass through various human births and experience pain, separation, suffering, falsehood and ignorance.

It is true of every soul on earth that it is a portion of the Divine Mother passing through the experiences of the Ignorance in order to arrive at the truth of its being and be the instrument of a Divine Manifestation and work here. 15 February 1937

The Mother's Interest in the World

Is it possible for the Mother or anyone living above the Overmind or even in the silence to take any interest in the world, since the world would be felt from there as a mere speck?

It all depends upon what basis one lives in the silence or above. A speck can be of as much interest to the Divine Consciousness as an infinity. 8 August 1934

The Mother and the Lower Prakriti

The higher Prakriti is the true nature of the Divine, so it can show Light and Ananda to people who are trying to reach the highest Truth; it is a help to sadhaks. But the lower Prakriti is impure and blind and can only show a limited Truth and a brief Ananda.

Everything comes from the Divine; but the lower Prakriti is the power of the Ignorance — it is not therefore a power of Truth, but only of mixed truth and falsehood. The Mother here stands not for the Power of the Ignorance, but for the Power that has

come down to bring down the Truth and rise up to the Truth out of the Ignorance.

12 April 1933

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In the past I committed one grand mistake — a total subordination of the consciousness of the Purusha to that of the Prakriti alone. There was not that strong drive of the Will to make the Purusha consciousness dynamic and living.

In order to get the dynamic realisation it is not enough to rescue the Purusha from subjection to Prakriti; we must transfer the allegiance of the Purusha from the lower Prakriti with its play of ignorant Forces to the Supreme Divine Shakti, the Mother.

Sometimes when I feel the necessity of standing apart from the play of Prakriti, I also have the counteracting feeling that this would mean a belittlement of the Mother.

It is a mistake to identify the Mother with the lower Prakriti and its mechanism of forces. Prakriti here is a mechanism only which has been put forth for the working of the evolutionary Ignorance. As the ignorant mental, vital or physical being is not itself the Divine, although it comes from the Divine — so the mechanism of Prakriti is not the Divine Mother. No doubt something of her is there in and behind this mechanism maintaining it for its evolutionary purpose — but what she is in herself is not a Shakti of Avidya, but the Divine Consciousness, Power, Light, Para Prakriti to whom we turn for the release and the divine fulfilment.

26 April 1933

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X told me that whatever we do, it is the Divine who acts through us. But it seems to me that the Divine cannot be behind *all* we do, because we do not always do the right thing. Is there any truth in what X says?

There is this much truth that the cosmic Force works out everything and the Cosmic Spirit (Virat Purusha) supports her action. But this cosmic Force is a Power that works under the conditions

of the Ignorance,— it appears as the lower nature and the lower nature makes you do wrong things. The Divine allows the play of these Forces so long as you do not yourself want anything better. But if you are a sadhak, then you do not accept the play of the lower nature, you turn to the Divine Mother instead, and ask her to work through you instead of the lower Nature. It is only when you have turned entirely in every part of your being to the Divine Mother and to her alone that the Divine will do all actions through you.

27 May 1933

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How can I know that the Mother is working in me? I believe that everything is done by the Mother, the good things and the bad, but X believes that very few things are done according to her will. How can I know what is divine and what is undivine?

Why should the Mother do bad things in you? It is Nature that acts for that, not the will of the Mother. You can at least know that anger, jealousy, envy, restlessness, despair, indolence etc. are not divine things and that purity, peace, harmony, zeal, unselfishness etc., are good things and help the growth to the Divine.

Forms, Powers, Personalities and Appearances of the Mother

Nirguna and Saguna (Formless and with Form)

My being rose higher and higher. I saw God's power of creation, and from there worlds, beings and gods were spreading out. Even God, through this power of creation, was getting expressed as different forms: Saguna, Nirguna, etc. God and this creative power are one; this creative power is his Shakti, the Mother. Is this correct?

It is right. There is no difficulty about it. Nirguna, Saguna are only aspects taken by the Divine in the manifestation. It is the Mother who manifests (creation is only manifestation) the Saguna or the Nirguna Ishwara.

28 June 1933

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This morning I perceived the Mother both as with Form and as the Formless.

Both experiences are correct. What is opposite and incompatible to the mind which thinks by limitations is not so to the Higher Consciousness. Neither Form nor Formlessness is the sole truth by itself excluding the other; the Divine manifests through both, but is bound by neither.

4 September 1933

*

My wife wishes to have explicit instructions from the Mother as to which of the following two procedures would be most conducive to her spiritual evolution:

(1) Should she meditate on the Lotus of the Heart and think of Mother as the Light of Lights situated therein, which is the real Bliss, Omnipresent and Omniscient, which supports everything in the universe and which sustains all by giving support and life to every variety of existence?

(2) Or should she think of Mother in her present form which she sees during Pranam, as separate from her physically and apart from her in her suite at the Ashram?

She has been brought up and moulded spiritually in the first way. She always cognises the Divine as Formless, Immanent and Omnipresent. But now if you advise it, she is willing to worship the Mother in her heart in a personal way.

To meditate on the Mother as the formless Divine is a good meditation and can be continued, but for the full effect in this Yoga it is not enough. To meditate on the personality of the Mother in the heart is also necessary — but whether she should do that now or not depends on the feeling in herself — whether she needs it or feels ready for it.

28 May 1935

Many Powers and Forms

I see the Mother in various forms but I am unable to understand their meaning. Is it true that she shows herself to us in different forms and aspects?

Of course. The Mother has many forms on the supraphysical planes.

12 March 1933

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Sometimes when I see the Mother I feel as if she is the image of divine Ananda and her form looks like that of a young girl. Is there any truth in my feeling?

Ananda is not the only thing — there is Knowledge and Power and Love and many other powers of the Divine. As a special experience only it may stand.

30 April 1933

*

I can see the Mother in different forms, on every level, in my *ādhāra*. I cannot understand what is the purpose of her taking different forms.

It is always so — the Mother manifests in many forms according to the need of what has to be done.

29 January 1934

Adyashakti

Adyashakti is the original Shakti, therefore the highest form of the Mother. Only she manifests in a different way according to the plane from which one sees her.

22 July 1933

Maheshwari, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi, Mahasaraswati

Yesterday night I saw Maheshwari above my head, Mahakali in my vital being and Mahalakshmi seated in my mind and heart. Each one radiated a different light from her body. Then I saw a few subtle powers descending into my being.

Maheshwari's natural place is in the higher consciousness above mind, for she is the wideness and largeness and wisdom of the Divine. Mahakali acts most naturally through the higher vital which is the instrument of force and power. Mahalakshmi acts through the heart—in your case at present she is acting through the mind also, though that is less usual—ordinarily it is Mahasaraswati.

31 August 1933

Maheshwari

Is Maheshwari on the Intuitive and the Overmind levels?

These Powers can manifest on all levels from the Overmind to the Physical.

25 August 1933

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I had a talk with X in which he said that Athena is a form or representation of Maheshwari. Some of my visions of Gods like Shiva were in forms resembling human forms, but I thought this was due to my having seen them on the planes relating to the human mind and so my mind saw them in that way. Before the material creation took place, the vital and mental worlds existed and before that the planes of the higher hemisphere existed. But did the Gods on these planes exist with forms and shapes or did they only exist as impersonal forces without forms?

As to the Gods, man can build forms which they will accept; but these forms too are inspired into man's mind from the planes to which the God belongs. All creation has the two sides, the formed and the formless; the Gods too are formless and yet have forms, but a Godhead can take many forms, here Maheshwari, there Pallas Athene. Maheshwari herself has many forms in her lesser manifestations, Durga, Uma, Parvati, Chandi etc. The Gods are not limited to human forms — man also has not always seen them in human forms only.

1 September 1935

Mahakali

Why is the Mother working in the form of Maheshwari in me?
Why is she working so slowly? If she worked in the form of
Mahakali, everything troubling me would flee from fear and
the Mother's luminous Sun would rise in me.

Mahakali can work only when there is a calm inner being and a resolute will facing without disturbance all the difficulties. When there is not that, then it is only possible for Maheshwari to work in order to bring her calm and wideness into the being.

20 November 1933

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Has anyone here concretely experienced the intense action of
Mahakali and successfully come through that?

Yes. There is at least one instance in which it was called down by the sadhaka and he met it full. There was a violent action shattering his old sanskaras, attachments etc. into atoms and he came through it all right.

13 January 1934

Krishna-Mahakali

The Mother in her cosmic power is all things and all divine Personalities, for nothing can be in manifestation except by her and as part of her being. But what was meant in the *Visions*

*and Voices*¹ was that the Ishwara and the Divine Shakti were one Person or Being in two aspects and it puts forward this union of them as Krishna-Mahakali as of great power for the manifestation.

20 October 1936

Mahakali and Kali

What is the essential difference between the Mahakali form as described in the *Chandi* and the Shyama form?

These — Kali, Shyama, etc. — are ordinary forms seen through the vital; the real Mahakali form whose origin is in the Overmind is not black or dark or terrible, but golden of colour and full of beauty, even when formidable to the Asuras. 10 February 1934

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Sometimes I see the Mother in the form of Mahakali or as the Transcendent and Universal Mother. But I see her in a white colour. I know that Kali is called Shyama because her colour is black, but I saw white. Why is this?

Mahakali and Kali are not the same, Kali is a lesser form. Mahakali in the higher planes appears usually with the golden colour. 13 March 1934

Kali

While praying today I saw the image of Mother Kali. She was black and naked and standing with her foot on the back of Shiva. Why is Kali seen in such a form and on what plane is she seen like this?

It is in the vital. It is Kali as a destroying Force — a symbol of the Nature Force in the ignorance surrounded by difficulties, trampling and breaking everything in a blind struggle to get through till she finds herself standing with her foot on the Divine itself

¹ By K. Amrita. Published in Amrita (Pondicherry: Sri Mira Trust, 1995), pp. 49–67.

—then she comes to herself and the struggle and destruction are over. That is the significance of the symbol. 9 February 1934

Durga

The lion is the attribute of the Goddess Durga, the conquering and protecting aspect of the Universal Mother. 12 July 1929

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Durga is the Mother's power of Protection. 15 April 1933

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The lion with Durga on it is the symbol of the Divine Consciousness acting through a divinised physical-vital and vital-material force. November 1933

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What aspect of the Mother's personality comes out on Prosperity day? Is it something like the goddess Annapurna, who satisfies one's material needs?

I suppose it would be some aspect like that — an aspect of Durga.

2 March 1934

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Your attitude towards any divine manifestation in the Mother's external consciousness is illuminating, "terrifying not only to the Asuras, but to the sadhaks". And yet it was only a limited and particular force — the Durga power! Others did not go so far as that, but they found her high, far-away, aloof, severe — asked what was the cause of her displeasure against them. And that comes to the same — to be severe against the Asuras is also to be severe against the sadhaks. A few struck a different note, delight at the greatness of the Power they felt, or, even when feeling nothing of that, a sense of the sudden lifting of obstacles. But that is not the general tone. It follows that the Mother cannot manifest anything in her external material because she has to

keep on a level with the sadhaks. And what then? If she is not to be allowed to protect herself, the work, the sadhaks, against the attacks of the Asuras on the physical plane — for it is there that there is the whole question, — then what is to be done? what can be done? Nothing. We can only wait for the supramental descent — and that descent is methodical but slow, for the opposition to that too is obstinate in the material Nature.

However, we must go on and do what can be done under these difficult conditions. I do not know how far it is wise not to come to pranam, — the results in others have not been brilliant but if it is only for a few days, and you insist, I shall not refuse. The real thing is however a change of the mental attitude — getting out of the world of ideas and feelings built by your mind which is a prison into a freedom and openness to the Divine that would be the most helpful to you. There would soon then be a compass and a rudder.

17 October 1934

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Is Durga a form and name of Mahalakshmi? Recently I heard the name “Durga” repeating itself in me and I felt release from heavy oppression. I am also attracted to the name “Krishna” and sometimes in a semi-sleep condition I find myself repeating “Durga-Mahakali-Krishna”.

Durga combines the characteristics of Maheshwari and Mahakali to a certain extent, — there is not much connection with Mahalakshmi. The combination of Krishna and Mahakali is one that has a great power in this Yoga and if the names rise together in your consciousness, it is a good sign.

21 March 1938

Mahalakshmi

A verse from the *Chandi* on Mahalakshmi came to me a minute or two after the Mother began to meditate with me. Afterwards the Mother explained that three forms of Mahalakshmi appeared in the meditation in response to my invocation. The first, the Mother said, was the original (Overmental) form of

Mahalakshmi, and the second was the traditional one. About the third, the Mother did not speak fully. The form was three-faced with something like a crown on top. Is there any tradition in India or outside of a three-faced form of Mahalakshmi? And what is the significance of the same goddess-personality of the Mother — Mahalakshmi — appearing in three successive forms?

The Mother told you all that she saw about the last form — it disappeared almost immediately. The first form was the true one, that which she wears on the Overmind Plane which is the home of the greater Gods — as soon as it touched your mind, it took the traditional form which is the one with which your mind is familiar. The third shape must be a symbolic one (not traditional) — it would seem to be a correspondent one on the Shakti side to the Trimurti, indicating the unity in difference of three powers in the Cosmic Consciousness — in it is the same manifestation in different forms, — the Overmind Power, the traditional Lakshmi and the One Power in the Mother here.

3 September 1936

Mahasaraswati

Today, immersed in deep meditation, I saw a beautiful chakra opening above my head, and on that chakra two lotuses were blooming and on those lotuses you and the Mother were sitting. After that, I invoked the Mother in my entire being and then I saw Mahasaraswati descending. Why did Mahasaraswati descend at my call and why did the chakra open above my head?

It is Mahasaraswati's work to use the power and light and experiences that come in from above so as to change in detail the whole outer nature.

24 April 1933

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Is it mostly the Mahasaraswati aspect of the Mother that works in our sadhana here?

At present since the sadhana came down to the physical consciousness—or rather it is a combination of Maheshwari-Mahasaraswati forces.

25 August 1933

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What is the wisdom that brought deeper gyri in the human brain, the perfect septa in the ventricles of the heart and such other details of structure? Is it the work of Mahasaraswati?

Yes—all perfection in intricacy of detail shows the touch of Mahasaraswati.

19 September 1933

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Sitting in meditation today I saw a river flowing from the higher consciousness level to the heart level in me. On this river was a golden boat and seated in it was Mahasaraswati, travelling down the river in golden and white light. What is the meaning of this?

That is the work of Mahasaraswati to move between the higher consciousness and the heart and through them establish the rule of the Truth in all details of the mind and life and physical nature.

7 December 1933

The Radha-Power

In the *Chandi* the names of the four Cosmic Powers of the Mother—Maheshwari, Mahakali, Mahalakshmi, Mahasaraswati—are mentioned along with others, but the name Radha is not mentioned. This is a clear proof of the fact that when the *Chandi* was composed the Radha-Power was not manifested to the vision of the saints and that the *Chandi* mentions only the Cosmic Powers of the Mother and not her supramental Powers. In the book *The Mother*, after describing the four Powers of the Mother, you have said: "There are other great Personalities of the Divine Mother, but they were more difficult to bring down and have not stood out in front with so much prominence in the evolution of the earth-spirit. There are among them Presences indispensable for the supramental realisation,—most of all one who is her Personality of that

mysterious and powerful ecstasy and Ananda which flows from a supreme divine Love, the Ananda that alone can heal the gulf between the highest heights of the supramental spirit and the lowest abysses of Matter, the Ananda that holds the key of a wonderful divinest Life and even now supports from its secracies the work of all the other Powers of the universe.” [pp. 23–24] Is not the Personality referred to in this passage the Radha-Power, which is spoken of as Premamayi Radha, Mahaprana Shakti and Hladini Shakti?

Yes — but the images of the Radha-Krishna lila are taken from the vital world and therefore it is only a minor manifestation of the Radha Shakti that is there depicted. That is why she is called Mahaprana Shakti and Hladini Shakti. What is referred to is not this minor form, but the full Power of Love and Ananda above.

7 February 1934

The Mother's Vibhutis

You write in *The Mother* that there are Vibhutis of the powers and personalities of the Ishwara and Vibhutis of the Mother, but that in both cases it is the action of the Grace of the Mother that alone can effect a transformation of the Vibhuti [p. 16]. I would like to know the difference. Take for example Christ, Chaitanya, Ramakrishna, Confucius, Zarathustra, Buddha, Shankara, Mohammed, Alexander, Napoleon — among these well-known figures, which are Vibhutis of the Mother and which are Vibhutis of the Ishwara? And what about the Mother's action in Avatars like Rama and Krishna?

The Mother's Vibhutis would normally be feminine personalities most of whom would be dominated by one of the four personalities of the Mother. The others you mention would be personalities and powers of the Ishwara, but in them also as in all the Mother's force would act. I do not quite catch the question about the transformation of the Vibhutis. All creation and transformation is the work of the Mother.

29 October 1935

Since all creation is the Mother's work, can it be taken that it is the personalities of the Mother who, behind the veil, prepare the conditions for the descent of the Avatar or Vibhuti?

If you mean the divine Personalities of the Mother — the answer is yes. It may even be said that each Vibhuti draws his energies from the Four, from one of them predominantly in most cases, as Napoleon from Mahakali, Rama from Mahalakshmi, Augustus Caesar from Mahasaraswati.

31 October 1935

Different Appearances of the Mother

When I look at the Mother during the morning pranam, she looks different than in the evening when she walks on the terrace or when I go to see her. Is it only my eyes or does she actually do something?

The Mother has not only one appearance, but many at different times.

14 May 1933

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Today while seeing the Mother on the terrace, I clearly saw the Mother's light and that her height was a bit taller than normal. Was this true?

Yes. Many see like that, as if the Mother were taller than her ordinary physical appearance.

29 September 1933

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The Mother has many different personalities and her appearance varies according as one or another predominates. The something common, of course, exists. There is first, the one whom all these personalities manifest but that cannot be expressed in name or word — there is also the supramental personality which from behind the veil presides over the aim of the present manifestation.

9 November 1933

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Why does the Mother appear different at different times, as at Pranam or Prosperity or while giving interviews? Sometimes even anatomical differences are visible. What is the reason for these differences in her appearance? Does it depend on the extent to which she turns outwards?

It is rather, I think, dependent on the personality that manifests in front — as she has many personalities and the body is plastic enough to express something of each when it comes forward.

4 December 1933

False Appearances of the Mother

In a dream I saw the Mother and made pranam to her. She was weeping and pitying me in my unfortunate state. But now I feel that the personality to whom I made pranam was not the Mother, but someone disguised as her.

It must obviously have been some force taking the form of the Mother — that often happens on the vital plane. Suggestions are given by these disguised forces which have to be rejected as you rejected this one.

7 September 1938

Section Two

The Mother, Sri Aurobindo
and the Integral Yoga

Two in One

One Consciousness

The opposition between the Mother's consciousness and my consciousness was an invention of the old days (due mainly to X, Y and others of that time) and emerged in a time when the Mother was not fully recognised or accepted by some of those who were here at the beginning. Even after they had recognised her they persisted in this meaningless opposition and did great harm to them and others. The Mother's consciousness and mine are the same, the one Divine Consciousness in two, because that is necessary for the play. Nothing can be done without her knowledge and force, without her consciousness—if anybody really feels her consciousness, he should know that I am there behind it and if he feels me it is the same with hers. If a separation is made like that (I leave aside the turns which their minds so strongly put upon these things), how can the Truth establish itself—from the Truth there is no such separation.

13 November 1934

One Force

Is there any difference in your working and the Mother's working—I mean any difference in the force or effectiveness?

No, it is a single Power.

23 May 1933

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Of course you are right in saying we are one and whatever is given is from both. If I give, the Mother's Force goes with it, or else the sadhak would get nothing, and if the Mother gives, my support goes with it and gives it my light as well as the Mother's. It is two sides of one indivisible action, one carrying with it the

other. It is the Mother's Force that gives the push, but also the peace.

16 July 1936

*

Whatever one gets from the Mother, comes from myself also — there is no difference. So, too, if I give anything, it is by the Mother's Force that it goes to the sadhak.

20 August 1936

One Path

There is something undivine in the world, a part that seems obscure; I said to the Mother that its truth here is expressed by the Mother's Light. The other truth is expressed by Sri Aurobindo's Light. They are two different paths and seem to be poles apart, yet they meet some place above.

If you allow such strange and wrong ideas to get hold of you, it is not surprising that you get confusion and find it difficult to make any steady progress.

The Mother's consciousness is the divine Consciousness and the Light that comes from it is the light of the divine Truth; the Force that she brings down is the force of the divine Truth. One who receives and accepts and lives in the Mother's light, will begin to see the truth on all the planes, the mental, the vital, the physical. He will reject all that is undivine; the undivine is the falsehood, the ignorance, the error of the dark forces; the undivine is all that is obscure and unwilling to accept the divine Truth and its light and force. The undivine, therefore, is all that is unwilling to accept the light and force of the Mother. That is why I am always telling you to keep yourself in contact with the Mother and with her Light and Force, because it is only so that you can come out of the confusion and obscurity and receive the Truth that comes from above.

When we speak of the Mother's Light or my Light in a special sense, we are speaking of a special occult action — we are speaking of certain lights which come from the Supermind. In this action the Mother's is the white Light which purifies, illumines, brings down the whole essence and power of the Truth

and makes the transformation possible. But in fact all light that comes from above, from the highest divine Truth is the Mother's.

There is no difference between the Mother's path and mine; we have and have always had the same path, the path that leads to the supramental change and the divine realisation; not only at the end, but from the beginning they have been the same.

The attempt to set up a division and opposition of this kind, putting the Mother on one side and myself on another and opposite or quite different side, has always been a trick of the forces of the Falsehood when they want to prevent a sadhaka from reaching the Truth. Dismiss all such falsehoods from your mind.

Know that the Mother's light and force are the light and force of the Truth; remain always in contact with the Mother's light and force, then only can you grow into the divine Truth.

10 September 1931

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I want to ask whether the idea of the Mother is the same as that of God. I thought that what we call Sri Aurobindo's Light or the Supramental Light leads to the realisation of God, while the realisation of the Mother is the realisation of Consciousness going parallel and also beyond in its separateness. If the One is the Mother, then does Sri Aurobindo's Light lead to something different, such as the ideals of the Upanishads — the realisation of the Purusha etc.? These differences never seem to meet in oneness.

I wrote once before that these ideas about the separation between the Mother and myself and our paths being different or our goal different are quite erroneous. Our path is the same; our goal too is the same — the Supramental Divine.

24 February 1932

*

Mother was doing Yoga before she knew or met Sri Aurobindo; but their lines of sadhana independently followed the same course. When they met, they helped each other in perfecting the

sadhana. What is known as Sri Aurobindo's Yoga is the joint creation of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother; they are now completely identified—the sadhana in the Asram and all arrangement is done directly by the Mother, Sri Aurobindo supports her from behind. All who come here for practising Yoga have to surrender themselves to the Mother who helps them always and builds up their spiritual life.

No Less nor Greater

I feel the Divine as spirit everywhere, pulling me towards Him. He is the Self of all and the Master of all. I feel He is greater than the Mother. I feel He is the Divine who is embodied in my Father Sri Aurobindo.

It is one aspect of the Divine—but the Divine as the Self and Lord and the Divine as the Mother are the same—there is no less nor greater.

31 March 1934

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Why do some people here consider you greater than the Mother? Are not both of you from the same plane? Is it not a veil over the human vision that makes such a distinction?

It is the minds that see surface things only and cannot see what is behind them.

28 March 1935

One in Two Bodies

Mother and I are one but in two bodies; there is no necessity for both the bodies to do the same thing always. On the contrary, as we are one it is quite sufficient for one to sign, just as it is quite sufficient for one to go down to receive Pranam or give meditation.

*

The Mother and I are one and equal. Also she is supreme here and has the right to arrange the work as she thinks best for the

work, no one has any right or claim or proprietorship over any work that may be given him. The Asram is the Mother's creation and would not have existed but for her, the work she does is her creation and has not been given to her and cannot be taken from her. Try to understand this elementary truth, if you want to have any right relation or attitude towards the Mother.

June 1935

APPENDIX

Two Texts

Sri Aurobindo wrote these two pieces around 1927, soon after the Mother took up the charge of the Ashram. In the first, he speaks from the point of view of the Mother; in the second, he speaks from the point of view of “the God of Wealth”. The second piece may have been written for a disciple who had undertaken to collect money for the Ashram.

1

I am *the Shakti of Sri Aurobindo alone*, and the Mother of all my children.

My children are all *equally* part of my consciousness and of my being. When transformed and realised, all will have an equal right to manifest each one an aspect of myself and Sri Aurobindo.

It is the unity of all in the solidarity of a common manifestation that will allow the creation of the new and divine world upon the Earth. Each will bring his part, but no part will be complete except as a power in the solidarity of the whole.

2

I am the God of Wealth, the Strong and Splendid, I am the Master of the thousands and the Regent of the millions, I am the puissant Creator, the full-handed gatherer, the opulent disposer of treasures. All the riches of every kind that are in the earth and on the earth and below it and all the riches that are in the waters are mine by right; I have power over all their plenitudes. My power is for the Mother; I call all these riches for her, that I may dedicate them to her, that I may lay them at the feet of the Mother of Radiances.ॐ तथास्तु

Incarnation and Evolution

The Mystery of Incarnation

Many years ago, the Mother wrote regarding life in the Asram: “In our daily practices we are endeavouring to express the great mystery of the Divine Incarnation.”¹ I pray that this message may be explained to me—and that I be enabled to understand its meaning fully and clearly.

It means that we act as we do because we take it as a fact that the Divine can manifest and is manifested in a human body.

Is this a message which can be circulated to all the members of the Asram?

Yes, they ought to know it.

To outsiders?

Not unless they are interested and seek the meaning of what we do.

I am also eager to know whether in my occupations at Madras, professionally and otherwise, I can pursue the life outlined in the message? Whether this message has any relation to such a life as mine?

Yes, of course, it applies to everybody who accepts the fundamental truth on which Mother based what she wrote.

29 December 1933

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¹ *The Mother, Words of the Mother—III (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 2004), Collected Works of the Mother (second edition), vol. 15, p. 32.*

What is the utility of making an effort for other realisations once we have known the supreme secret (*uttamānī rahasyam*) that you are the Divine Incarnate and the Mother is the Para-Shakti? That is the highest realisation, I think, and all others — the realisation of the cosmic consciousness, of the presence of the immanent Divine, even of the silent immutable Brahman — are secondary in comparison with it. Whatever is to be done in the world will be done by you and the Mother.

Yes, but for that to be a constant realisation in its fullness the same effort has to be made and if made will bring the other realisations with it as parts of the main realisation.

30 October 1936

The Reason for Their Embodiment

The supramental creation, since it is to be a creation upon earth, must be not only an inner change but a physical and external manifestation also. And it is precisely for this part of the work, the most difficult of all, that surrender is most needful; for this reason, that it is the actual descent of the supramental Divine into Matter and the working of the Divine Presence and Power there that can alone make the physical and external change possible. Even the most powerful self-assertion of human will and endeavour is impotent to bring it about; as for egoistic insistence and vital revolt, they are, so long as they last, insuperable obstacles to the descent. Only a calm, pure and surrendered physical consciousness, full of the psychic aspiration, can be its field; this alone can make an effective opening of the material being to the Light and Power and the supramental change a thing actual and practicable. It is for this that we are here in the body, and it is for this that you and other sadhaks are in the Asram near us. But it is not by insistence on petty demands and satisfactions in the external field or on an outer nearness pleasing to the vital nature and its pride or desire that you can get the true relation with the Divine in this province. If you want the realisation there, it is the true nearness that you must seek, the descent and presence of the Mother in your physical consciousness, her constant inner touch

in the physical being and its activities, her will and knowledge behind all its work and thought and movement and the ever present Ananda of that presence expelling all vital and physical separateness, craving and desire. If you have that, then you have all the nearness you can ask for and the rest you will gladly leave to the Mother's knowledge and will to decide. For with this in you there can be no feeling of being kept away, no sense of "gulf" and "distance", no complaint of a unity that is lacking or an empty dryness and denial of nearness. 6 December 1930

*

You have written in a letter, "A surrender by any means is good, but obviously the Impersonal is not enough, for surrender to that may be limited in result to the inner experience without any transformation of the outer being."² I do not understand.

It is rather surprising that you should be unable to understand such a simple and familiar statement; for that has been always the whole reason of this Yoga that to follow after the Impersonal only brings inner experience or at the most mukti. Without the action of the integral Divine there is no change of the whole nature. If it were not so the Mother would not be here and I would not be here—if a realisation of the Impersonal were sufficient. 15 September 1936

Connections in Past Lives

By what *punya* of ours has the Grace granted to us, mere humans, this rare privilege of coming here at the Divine's Feet?

It is the call of your soul that brought you here and also some aspiration or connection with the Mother and myself in past lives. 6 May 1933

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² Sri Aurobindo, Letters on Yoga (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, 1970), Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library, vol. 23, p. 613.

What sort of *bhakti* in my past lives has brought me to the Mother's feet?

The aspiration for union with the Divine and perhaps also for the descent of the Divine on the earth.

8 May 1933

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People make all sorts of effort to have God's darshan; some even weep and weep, yet they fail to obtain it. We in the Asram don't seem to have done very much, and yet we are here with you. What has brought this about?

There are many things that have brought it about — a connection in past lives with the Mother and myself, the development of your nature in former births which made it possible for you to seek the Divine, *bhakti* in those lives bearing its fruit now — finally, the Divine Grace.

October 1935

Carrying on the Evolution

It is said that you and the Mother have been on the earth since its creation. But what have you been doing for so many millions of years in disguise? I say "disguise" because it is only now that you are showing yourselves to the world in your real nature.

Carrying on the evolution.

25 September 1935

*

I fail to understand what you mean by "Carrying on the evolution." Could you explain this more fully?

That would mean writing the whole of human history. I can only say that as there are special descents to carry on the evolution to a farther stage, so also something of the Divine is always there to help through each stage itself in one direction or another.

26 September 1935

*

I can understand how ordinary people in the past may not have recognised your presence, especially when you lived outwardly like human beings. But how is it that even Sri Krishna, Buddha or Christ could not recognise your presence in this world?

Presence where and in whom? If they did not meet, they would not recognise, and even if they met there is no reason why the Mother and I should cast off the veil which hung over these personalities and reveal the Divine behind them. Those lives were not meant for any such purpose. 27 September 1935

*

If you and the Mother were on earth all the time, it would mean that you were here when those great beings descended. Then whatever your external cloak, how could you hide your inner self — the true divinity — from them?

But why cannot the inner self be hidden from all in such lives? Your reasoning would only have some force if the presence on earth then were as the Avatar, but not if it was only as a Vibhuti.

So, in answer to the question, “Presence where and in whom?” I would say, “Presence in this world and in Thyself and the Mother.”

“Presence in Thyself” means nothing. It is “presence” in or behind some body and behind some outer personality. Also “presence” in what part of the world? If Mother were in Rome at the time of Buddha, how could Buddha know as he did not even know the existence of Rome?

I did not mean that you or the Mother needed to cast off your veil. It is those great men who should have recognised you in spite of the veil.

One can be a great man without knowing such things as that. Great men or even great Vibhutis need not be omniscient or know things which it was not useful for them to know.

27 September 1935

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You write: "But why cannot the inner self be hidden from all in such lives?" I fail to understand how anyone could hide one's inner self from Avatars and Vibhutis.

An Avatar or Vibhuti have the knowledge that is necessary for their work; they need not have more. There was absolutely no reason why Buddha should know what was going on in Rome. An Avatar even does not manifest all the Divine omniscience and omnipotence; he has not come for any such unnecessary display; all that is behind him but not in the front of his consciousness. As for the Vibhuti, the Vibhuti need not even know that he is a power of the Divine. Some Vibhutis, like Julius Caesar for instance, have been atheists. Buddha himself did not believe in a personal God, only in some impersonal and indescribable Permanent.

Still I can't understand one thing: even though you did not cast off your veil, how could Krishna, Buddha and Christ not help casting off their veil in order to recognise you?

Why should they? The veil was there necessary for their work. Why should it be thrown off? So if the Mother was present in the life of Christ, she was there not as the Divine Manifestation but as one altogether human. For her to be recognised as the Divine would have created a tremendous disorder and frustrated the work Christ came to do by breaking its proper limits.

Moreover, you must have heard that just before Christ was born some Rishis from India knew of the divine Descent and set out for Jerusalem merely by their inspiration, though they had not known what and where Jerusalem was.

I never heard of Rishis from India going there. There is a legend of some Mages getting an intimation that a divine Birth was there on earth and following a star that led them to the stable in which Christ was born. But this is a legend, not history.

29 September 1935

Since you and the Mother were on earth constantly from the beginning what was the need for Avatars coming down here one after another?

We were not on earth as Avatars.

15 December 1935

*

You say that you both were not on earth as Avatars and yet you were carrying on the evolution. Since the Divine Himself was on the earth carrying on the evolution, what was the necessity for the coming down of the Avatars who are portions of Himself?

The Avatar is necessary when a special work is to be done and in crises of the evolution. The Avatar is a special manifestation, while for the rest of the time it is the Divine working within the ordinary human limits as a Vibhuti.

18 December 1935

The Guru, the Divine and the Truth

Is there really any difference between the Guru, the Divine and the Truth in our Yoga? I have been considering that the Mother and yourself are not only the Gurus but also the Divine, and that whatever either of you say is the law of the Truth. Why then are you using these three different words?³

I wrote the general law of spiritual life and obedience. You have to know that as well as its special application here. Moreover many here are satisfied with saying "The Mother is divine," but they do not follow her commands. Others do not really regard her as Divine — they treat her as if she were an ordinary Guru.

13 June 1933

*

Yesterday you spoke about the Mother's commands. What are they? I want to try to follow them.

³ See letter of 12 June 1933, published on page 672 of Letters on Himself and the Ashram, volume 35 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. — Ed.

They are supposed to be known. You have to do the right thing and follow the Yoga sincerely.

14 June 1933

The Mother, Sri Aurobindo and the Overmind

Even the Overmind is for all but the Mother and myself either unrealised or only an influence, mostly subjective.

24 March 1934

The Mother, Sri Aurobindo and the Supramental Descent

X has made the following remark: "The present preparation is going on to bring down the Supermind into the physical of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo." Is it correct?

[*Sri Aurobindo bracketed "The present preparation is going on to bring down the Supermind into the physical", and wrote:*] Not quite correct in all points. The things to be brought down were in us no doubt — but not all outwardly manifested, from the beginning. Of course X's statement is altogether true only as far as the bracket goes.

14 September 1935

*

When you wrote "as far as the bracket goes", did you not notice that you cut off the last part of X's answer?

Yes, of course. What is being done is meant to prepare the manifestation of the supermind in the earth-consciousness down to Matter itself, so it can't be for the physical of myself or the Mother alone.

15 September 1935

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It seems to me that if the Supermind has not descended into Mother's body-consciousness, it is not because she is not ready for it, but because she has first to prepare the physical of the sadhaks and of the earth to a certain extent. But some people here take it in the wrong way; they think that the Supermind has not yet descended into her body because she has not yet reached perfection. Am I right?

Certainly. If we had lived physically in the Supermind from the beginning, nobody would have been able to approach us nor could the sadhana have been done. There could have been no hope of contact between ourselves and the earth and men. Even as it is, Mother has to come down towards the lower consciousness of the sadhaks instead of keeping always in her own, otherwise they begin to say, "How far away, how severe you were; you do not love me, I get no help from you etc. etc." The Divine has to veil himself in order to meet the human.

18 October 1935

The Triple Transformation and Control over Death

There are three stages of the sadhana, psychic change, transition to the higher levels of consciousness — with a descent of their powers, conscious forces — the supramental. In the last even the control over death is a later, not an initial stage. Each of these stages demands a great length of time and a high and long endeavour. The legend related to you comes partly from a false idea that Mother and Sri Aurobindo will bring down everything and the sadhaks have only to wait and receive, a misconception responsible for much inner indolence and inertia, and the fact that for a long time a certain protection was over the Asram so that there was no death of any sadhak and little illness — the legend survives, though the circumstances are not now the same.

26 July 1937

Difficulties of the Pathfinders

The Burden of Humanity

Mother spoke to me of the right attitude as one without tension and strain, one which is full of sunshine and as spontaneous as a flower opening to the light. This is all very well for beings like you and the Mother, who are Avatars, but how can we poor mortals take this vague prescription for guidance? And how to get this attitude if not through constant prayer, arduous meditation and a constant effort to reject wrong movements?

You say that this way is too difficult for you or the likes of you and it is only “avatars” like myself or the Mother that can do it. That is a strange misconception, for it is on the contrary the easiest and simplest and most direct way and anyone can do it, if he makes his mind and vital quiet, even those who have a tenth of your capacity can do it. It is the other way of tension and strain and hard endeavour that is difficult and needs a great force of Tapasya. As for the Mother and myself, we have had to try all ways, follow all methods, to surmount mountains of difficulties, a far heavier burden to bear than you or anybody else in this Asram or outside, far more difficult conditions, battles to fight, wounds to endure, ways to cleave through impenetrable morass and desert and forest, hostile masses to conquer, a work such as I am certain none else had to do before us. For the Leader of the Way in a work like ours has not only to bring down and represent and embody the Divine, but to represent too the ascending element in humanity and to bear the burden of humanity to the full and experience not in a mere play or *līlā* but in grim earnest all the obstruction, difficulty, opposition, baffled and hampered and only slowly victorious labour which are possible on the Path. But it is not necessary nor tolerable that all that should be repeated over again to the full in the experience

of others. It is because we have the complete experience that we can show a straighter and easier road to others—if they will only consent to take it. It is because of our experience won at a tremendous price that we can urge upon you and others, “Take the psychic attitude; follow the straight sunlit path, with the Divine openly or secretly upbearing you—if secretly, he will yet show himself in good time,—do not insist on the hard, hampered, roundabout and difficult journey.” 5 May 1932

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As for the question about the illness, perfection in the physical plane is indeed part of the ideal of the Yoga, but it is the last item and, so long as the fundamental change has not been made in the material consciousness to which the body belongs, one may have a certain perfection on other planes without having immunity in the body. We have not sought perfection for our own separate sake, but as part of a general change creating a possibility of perfection for others. That could not have been done without our accepting and facing the difficulties of the realisation and transformation and overcoming them for ourselves. It has been done to a sufficient degree on the other planes—but not yet on the most material part of the physical plane. Till it is done, the fight there continues and, though there may be and is a force of Yogic action and defence, there cannot be immunity. The Mother’s difficulties are not her own; she bears the difficulties of others also and those that are inherent in the general action and working for transformation. If it had been otherwise, it would be a very different matter.

August 1936

*

The Mother has often lost flesh and put it on again. It is lasting longer this time because of the pressure of the struggle in the material part of Nature—for the main burden of the struggle on each plane has always fallen on her, since it is she who bears up all the others.

22 October 1936

Difficulties and the Sunlit Path

You are quite mistaken in thinking that the possibility of the sunlit path is a discovery or original invention of mine. The very first books of Yoga I read more than thirty years ago spoke of the dark and the sunlit way and emphasised the superiority of the second over the other.

It is not either because I have myself trod the sunlit way or flinched from difficulty and suffering and danger. I have had my full share of these things and the Mother has had ten times her full share. But that was because the finders of the Way had to face these things in order to conquer. No difficulty that can come on the sadhak but has faced us on the path; against many we have had to struggle hundreds of times (in fact, that is an understatement) before we could overcome; many still remain protesting that they have a right until the perfect perfection is there. But we have never consented to admit their inevitable necessity for others. It is in fact to ensure an easier path to others hereafter that we have borne that burden. It was with that object that the Mother once prayed to the Divine that whatever difficulties, dangers, sufferings were necessary for the path might be laid on her rather than on others. It has been so far heard that as a result of daily and terrible struggles for years those who put an entire and sincere confidence in her *are* able to follow the sunlit path and even those who cannot, yet when they do put the trust find their path suddenly easy and, if it becomes difficult again, it is only when distrust, revolt, abhiman, or other darknesses come upon them. The sunlit path is not altogether a fable. November 1935

Vital Sensitiveness

Does everybody have to pass through the stage of vital sensitiveness?

The Mother and myself have passed through it. It comes inevitably in the full opening of the being to the universal.

17 April 1936

Self-imposed Bareness

After realisation whatever the Higher Will demands is the best¹ — but first detachment is the rule. To reach the Freedom without the discipline and detachment is given to few. The Mother and myself went for years through the utmost self-imposed bareness of life.

15 November 1933

Joyous Sacrifice

By the way, do you think that the Mother or myself or others who have taken up the spiritual life had not enjoyed life and that it is therefore that the Mother was able to speak of a joyous sacrifice to the Divine as the true spirit of spiritual sacrifice? Or do you think we spent the preliminary stages in longings for the lost fleshpots of Egypt and that it was only later on we felt the joy of the spiritual sacrifice? Of course we did not; we and many others had no difficulty on the score of giving up anything we thought necessary to give up and no hankerings afterwards. Your rule is as usual a stiff rule that does not at all apply generally.

17 October 1935

No Grand Trunk Road

I have heard that X has come down to this sorrowful world of ours from one of those rarefied invisible worlds; for one like him, everything becomes a Grand Trunk Road.

Nobody has found this Yoga a Grand Trunk Road, neither X nor Y nor even myself or the Mother. All such ideas are a romantic illusion.

August 1935

¹ This reply was written in answer to a sadhak's remark concerning the wearing of beautiful clothing.—Ed.

Helpers on the Way

Sadhana through the Mother and Sri Aurobindo

These are questions that I cannot answer — it is not for me to reply to such queries.¹ I can only say that the final aim of the Yoga here is to bring down the supramental Truth (all other aims and stages being preliminary and instrumental) and organise its action. The Asram proceeds on the assumption that this has to be done through myself and the Mother and in accepting this aim and the descent of this Truth the sadhaks accept myself and the Mother and must be guided by us and receive from us what is descending and cannot attain it otherwise. If they follow or want some other Truth, they are free to do so but they cannot do it here, because here they will not succeed, as it is not the end for which the Divine Force is working here. And it has been found that if they reject the Power that comes from us to follow something which is not that, it leads them out of this way and they cannot profit by our presence or by the Yoga or form a harmonious unit in the work that is to be done here. That is all I am prepared to say in this matter.

30 December 1932

The Only Way to Advance

This morning when I saw the Mother I got some contact with her consciousness. I was very impressed by her saying that she thought I am sincerely doing sadhana and by her giving me the flower called Supramental Future. Both these things gave me hope, especially the latter, for I have been wondering whether I would realise up to the supramental consciousness.

These days many forces have been pulling me in different directions; in this way I don't arrive at the Truth or at the organisation of my being. Now and then I get experiences,

¹ *The questions Sri Aurobindo was asked are not available. — Ed.*

but I also get confusion and nothing is settled. Sometimes the very law of life seems to be fight and disagreement.

Today I felt a quiet peace in the vital and the Mother's consciousness. For a long time I remained quiet after seeing the Mother. I am getting many experiences, but the consciousness gets diverted by suggestions and by activity.

1. A quiet mind makes consciousness easier.

2. If you keep a quiet mind and a constant contact with myself and the Mother and the true Light and Force, then things will become easy and straight — it is the *only* way to get to the realisation.

3. It is a mistake to think that this method will not lead you to the supramental realisation. It is the only way to advance towards the supramental change.

4. It is because you become doubtful and begin to follow after other ways and other (lower) experiences that you get again confused and full of incertitudes.

5. Keep to *one* way, the way shown to you by me. It is by following this way that you can reach the wideness you want — if you run about on many ways, that will bring not wideness but confusion.

6. Here in the lower nature there are many things, but they are in a state of disharmony, so to follow them all together means disharmony, confusion, want of organisation, fight. In the higher (supramental) nature there is a greater wideness and much more is there than in the lower nature; but all is harmony, organisation, peace. Follow therefore the one way that leads to the higher supramental nature.

7. Do not be impatient, because full knowledge does not come to you at once. In quietude of mind keep the contact, let the true Light and Force work and with time all knowledge will come and the Truth will grow in you.

2 February 1932

Taking Refuge in Their Protection

You may be sure that we shall not desert you and that we would never dream of doing so. You say truly that what drives you

into these moods is the Asuric Maya or a goad from the Asura — it is what we speak of as the hostile Force. What answers to it is a part of the human vital that has an attraction or habit of response to suffering, self-torment, depression and despair. But in itself what comes is from outside and not from within you. It is, as I have more than once told you, a formation that has been made and repeats itself and this is shown by the fact that once it starts it goes round always in the same course of ideas, suggestions and feelings. The first thing you have to do is to recognise it for what it is. It was not, for instance, "all your nature" that advised you not to write to the Mother, but it was the suggestion of this Force. If you recognise these things as suggestions — and of a Force adverse to you and your sadhana — it is easier to meet and answer than if you see it as something in yourself. The second thing is to take refuge in your better and higher self against that vital part which responds to these suggestions. You must not regard this part as all your nature, but only a part of your vital which has taken an exaggerated prominence. Even in the vital the larger part by far was that which had high ambitions, generous feelings, a large-heartedness which everybody was obliged to recognise. That is what you must regard as your real self and you must believe that the Divine has a use for that and for the faculties that have been given you — believe not in a rajasic or egoistic spirit but in the spirit of the instrument called and chosen to purify itself and be fit for its work and service — and because of that you have no right to throw it or yourself away, but have to persevere quietly till you are rid of the lower nature and the Asuric Maya. And, last but not least, you have to develop the power and the habit of taking refuge in the protection of the Mother and myself. It is for this reason that the habit of criticising and judging by the outer mind or cherishing its preconceived ideas and formations must disappear. You should repeat always to yourself when it tries to rise, "Sri Aurobindo and the Mother know better than myself — they have the experience and knowledge which I have not — they must surely be acting for the best and in a greater light than that of ordinary human knowledge." If you can fix that idea in

yourself so that it will remain even in clouded moments, you will be able to face much more easily the suggestions of the Asuric Maya.

The idea of suicide is always a sign of these Asuric formations. Like all the rest it is perfectly irrational — for the suicide after death goes through a hell of misery far worse than was possible in life and when he is reborn he has to face the same problems and difficulties he fled from, but in an acuter form and in much less favourable circumstances. The other justifying suggestions were equally irrational and untrue. Wherever you went, the blow would always fall on ourselves and the Asram, for you are and would remain too intimately identified with us for it to be otherwise and distance would make no difference. And certainly the verse in the Gita does not cover a case of suicide, but refers to the consciousness and concentration of the Yogi in his departure.

18 October 1934

Their Attitude towards the Sadhaks

You need not think that anything can alter our attitude towards you. That which is extended to you is not a vital human love which can be altered by external things: it remains and persistently we shall try to help and lift you up and lead you towards the Light where in the union of soul and heart you will recognise the Friend and the Mother.

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I was overjoyed to read your letter — first because it relieved me from the anxiety which your persistent trouble had given and, most, because of the clarity of consciousness which has liberated you. Yes, that was the main difficulty — that and the clinging to wrong ideas which it has created. You should never doubt about the reality and sincerity of our feeling towards you, mine and the Mother's — for it creates a veil and separates, where there should be no separation, and it is a first barrier against that openness which is necessary if one is to receive fully or even at all from the Guru. Of course, I saw that something had blinded you and

was keeping you unconscious of the source of the trouble, but there was needed a certain clarity of the soul to remove it. Now that it has come, I trust that it will keep the mind clear and free the ways of the spirit.

*

When these moods come upon you, why do you run away from the Mother and avoid her? Why do you not come to her, tell her frankly what you feel and what is in your mind and let her take the trouble from you?

The reasons you give for wishing to leave us are no good reasons at all. If you want to see the richness and greatness of God, you will, if you wait, see more of it with us than you ever can outside. And if you want to see the Himalayas, it will be much better for you to see them hereafter with your Mother beside you.

You are quite mistaken when you say that if you will go, there will be no Devil left in the Asram. The Devil is not here because of you; he is here because he wants to give trouble to the Mother and spoil her work. And what he chiefly wants is to drive her children away from her, and especially those who like you are nearest to her. If you go, he will remain; and not only he will remain, but he will feel that he has won a great victory and will set himself with a double vigour to attack her through others.

You talk of not giving trouble to the Mother and to me; but do you not realise that nothing can be worse trouble to us than your going away? The moods of revolt that come upon you are clouds that pass; but to see you leave us in this way and feel our love rejected and your place near us empty would be indeed a real trouble to us and we would feel it more deeply than anything else you could do.

You know that it is not true that your sole desire is to go away. It is only so when you are in these moods. And you know that these are moods that pass, and if you allow the Mother to take them away, they go at once. The trouble is that when they come, you take them too much to heart and you begin to

think that there is nothing else to do but go away. I assure you that that is no solution and that we would much rather have you with us even with these moods than be separated from you; compared with our love for you, the trouble they give us is mere dust in the balance.

Read this letter, talk with the Mother and act according to your true self; never mind the rest.

7 March 1930

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I hope you have been able to recover or have begun to recover from the mass of suggestions that fell upon you with regard to the Mother's relations with you and her feeling towards you which have not varied from a constant loving kindness, affection and good will. Especially since the time you returned from Bengal her appreciation of the good work you have done for us there has been constant and never varied for a moment. The suggestions that fell upon you were certainly the result of a passing despondency and nervous upset: there was nothing on our side, no coldness, no displeasure, no indifference and, had these or any similar feelings been there — and there never was any reason for her feeling them — she could not have and had no wish to manifest anything of the kind either by gesture or otherwise. These were the suggestions of an adverse force which wanted to push you away from her and create a distance between her and you so that you might be discouraged in your sadhana and, if possible, induced to go away from us. It is impossible that we should ever accept the idea of your leaving us and unthinkable that we should ever admit any sunderance between us. This attack upon you, the depression and nervous upset and all these suggestions were part of a general attack which has been raging against us from adverse forces for some time past, but I hope that the worst of it is over for you and that you will be able to go on untroubled in your sadhana. It is needless then to insist that she never thought of you as excluded from her Light which is also mine; that Light will be with you and will, I hope, help to light you on your path towards the realisation you long for.

4 April 1950

Faithfulness to the Light and the Call

When I spoke of being faithful to the light of the soul and the divine Call, I was not referring to anything in the past or to any lapse on your part. I was simply suggesting the great need in all crises and attacks,—to refuse to listen to any suggestions, impulses, lures and to oppose to them all the call of the Truth, the imperative beckoning of the Light. In all doubt and depression, to say “I belong to the Divine, I cannot fail”; to all suggestions of impurity and unfitness, to reply “I am a child of Immortality chosen by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother; I have but to be true to myself and to them — the victory is sure; even if I fell, I would be sure to rise again”; to all impulsions to depart and serve some other ideal, to reply “This is the greatest, this is the Truth, this alone can satisfy the soul within me; I will endure through all tests and tribulations to the very end of the divine journey.” This is what I mean by faithfulness to the Light and the Call.

31 March 1930

Openness to the Mother and Sri Aurobindo

Is it the same whether we write to Sri Aurobindo or to the Mother? Some say that both are one, so whether we write to Sri Aurobindo or to the Mother we are open to the Mother. Is this correct?

It is true that we are one, but there is also a relation, which necessitates that one should be open to the Mother.

Can it happen that one who is open to Sri Aurobindo is not open to the Mother? Is it that whoever is open to the Mother is open to Sri Aurobindo?

The Mother proposition is true. If one is open to Sri Aurobindo and not to the Mother it means that one is not really open to Sri Aurobindo.

Very often Sri Aurobindo says one should allow the Mother’s

force to govern. Does it mean that there is a difference between the two forces?

There is one force only, the Mother's force — or, if you like to put it like that, the Mother is Sri Aurobindo's Force.

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Somebody told me: "When I came here, Sri Aurobindo never used to teach us anything about the Yoga. He told us to follow our own knowledge." Is this so?

I am not aware of that. But now also the Mother does not teach, she asks all to open and receive. But she does not tell them and I don't think I told people to follow their own "knowledge".

26 April 1933

Their Presence

It is quite sure that we are with you day and night; even if you do not yet see the Mother in your dreams or feel her presence, you should think of her as there and supporting you and that will surely help you.

If there is a natural movement of your mind to identify Shiva in the way you speak of and it jumps to myself and the Mother, why not let it take the jump? Perhaps it is not a jump but a natural transition, and reconciliation and not a conflict. Certainly, your pranams are always accepted by us and always will be.

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Our presence, force, peace, love are always with you. That is a thing you must realise and learn to keep the consciousness of it. If you do that, all the rest is of minor importance (your difficulties, the old nature etc.) and will be set right in due time.

Calling the Mother and Sri Aurobindo

While aspiring towards the Mother and repeating her name, your name comes in as well. Strange!

You must always aspire towards the Mother, because hers is the force which can alone give you the true realisation of the Divine. If your mind wants to do otherwise, you must control it. Any separation made by it between the Mother and myself (like substituting my name for hers) must be discouraged — because when that happens, errors may creep into the inner experience.

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When I aspire to feel Mother with me and call "Mother, Mother", something in me calls "Lord, Lord" and I feel him near me! What is this you are doing, Lord?

Probably I come to work in you so that it may become easier for you to feel the Mother with you always.

Receiving Their Influence

There are no conditions for receiving the influence of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother² except faith, an entire sincerity in following the spiritual path and a will and capacity to open oneself to the influence; but this capacity usually comes as the result of sincerity and faith.

It is quite possible to follow the Yoga while remaining outside the Asram. There are many both in Northern and Southern India who do it.

You can submit your doubts for elucidation to Sri Aurobindo, if brief answers are sufficient, as he has little time. If longer and more detailed answers are necessary, it could only be done through one of his disciples.

28 October 1934

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We are doubtful about the advisability of your coming here the next winter. Your illness and the fact that you suffer from the heat stand in the way, for in Southern India the heat is extreme. The sudden change of climate and ways of life may be hard to

² Written by Sri Aurobindo to his secretary, who replied to the correspondent.—Ed.

bear. Moreover there will not be truly competent medical aid and advice available here as it would be in America. Finally, you do not know perhaps that I am living for the present in an entire retirement, not seeing or speaking with anyone, even the disciples in the Asram, only coming out to give a silent blessing three times in a year. The Mother also has not time to give free or frequent access to those who are here. You would therefore probably be disappointed if you came here with the idea of a personal contact with us to help you in your spiritual endeavour. The personal touch is there but it is more of an inward closeness with only a few points of physical contact to support it. But this inner contact, inner help can very well be received at a distance. We have not any disciples in America, though several Americans have come recently here and became interested in the Yoga. But we have disciples in France and some of these have been able already to establish an inner closeness with us and to become aware of our nearness and help in their spiritual endeavour and experience. We would advise you therefore to try this way where you are rather than face the difficulty and inconveniences of a journey and stay here which, if necessary, could be undertaken with more advantage after you have gone some way on the path rather than at present.

9 September 1936

Following a Hostile Influence

If you want the plain and simple truth, the plain truth is this that you have entered into a complete falsehood and have put yourself into the hands of a hostile Influence that lives by confusion and ignorance. You began by setting your own imperfect thinking power against a superior Truth and Knowledge. And by false and fantastic reasonings you have so clouded your mind that it has become entirely muddled and confused and incapable of understanding the plainest distinctions or discriminating between falsehood and Truth. This is evident in all you are saying and doing; it is not Truth and religion, but the false and inadequate ideas of your own confused and weakened mind that you are trying to force upon others.

The letter you wrote to me shows a surprising inability to understand the plainest distinctions and the simplest truths. The one who was an instrument for giving birth to the physical body of X was no doubt in her lifetime his material mother. But the relation which exists between the Mother here and X (and between the Mother and all who accept her), is a psychic and spiritual motherhood. It is a far greater relation than that of the physical mother to her child; it gives all that human motherhood can give, but in a much higher way, and it contains in itself infinitely more. It can therefore, because it is greater and more complete, take altogether the room of the physical relation and replace it both in the inward and the outward life. There is nothing here that can confuse anyone who has common sense and a straightforward intelligence. The physical fact cannot in the least stand in the way of the greater psychic and spiritual truth or prevent it from being true. X is perfectly right when he says that this is his true mother; for she has given him a new birth in an inner life and is creating him anew for a diviner existence.

The idea of spiritual Motherhood is not an invention of this Asram; it is an eternal truth which has been recognised for ages past both in Europe and in Asia. The distinction I have drawn between the physical relation and the psychic and spiritual relation is also not a new invention; it is an idea known and understood everywhere and found to be perfectly plain and simple by all. It is the present confused state of your own mind which prevents you from understanding what men have found natural and intelligible everywhere.

As for X and Y, you have no claim over them and no right to control their thoughts and actions. X is of an age to choose and decide; he can think and act for himself and has no need of you to think and act for him. You are not his guardian nor Y's; you are not even the head of the family. On what ground do you claim to decide where he shall go or where he shall stay? Your pretension to have the responsibility for him or her before God is an arrogant and grotesque absurdity. Each one is responsible for himself before God unless he freely chooses to place the responsibility upon another in whom he trusts. No one has the

right to impose himself as a religious or spiritual guide on others against their free will. You have no claim at all to dictate to X or Y either in their inner or their outer life. It is again the confusion and incoherence of your mind in its present state that prevents you from recognising these plain and simple facts.

Again, you say that you ask only for the Truth and yet you speak like a narrow and ignorant fanatic who refuses to believe in anything but the religion in which he was born. All fanaticism is false, because it is a contradiction of the very nature of God and of Truth. Truth cannot be shut up in a single book, Bible or Veda or Koran, or in a single religion. The Divine Being is eternal and universal and infinite and cannot be the sole property of the Mussulmans or of the Semitic religions only,— those that happened to be in a line from the Bible and to have Jewish or Arabian prophets for their founders. Hindus and Confucians and Taoists and all others have as much right to enter into relation with God and find the Truth in their own way. All religions have some truth in them, but none has the whole truth; all are created in time and finally decline and perish. Mahomed himself never pretended that the Koran was the last message of God and there would be no other. God and Truth outlast these religions and manifest themselves anew in whatever way or form the Divine Wisdom chooses. You cannot shut up God in the limitations of your own narrow brain or dictate to the Divine Power and Consciousness how or where or through whom it shall manifest; you cannot put up your puny barriers against the divine Omnipotence. These again are simple truths which are now being recognised all over the world; only the childish in mind or those who vegetate in some formula of the past deny them.

You have insisted on my writing and asked for the Truth and I have answered. But if you want to be a Mussulman, no one prevents you. If the Truth I bring is too great for you to understand or to bear, you are free to go and live in a half-truth or in your own ignorance. I am not here to convert anyone; I do not preach to the world to come to me and I call no one. I am here to establish the divine life and the divine Consciousness in

those who of themselves feel the call to come to me and cleave to it and in no others. I am not asking you and the Mother is not asking you to accept us. You can go any day to Hyderabad and live either the worldly life or a religious life according to your own preference. But as you are free so also are others free to stay here and follow their own way. You are not entitled to try to make yourself a centre of disturbance and an obstacle to their peace and their spiritual progress.

In answering you I am answering the ideas which have been put in you by the Power of darkness and ignorance that is just now using you for its own purpose. This Power is very obviously not the divine Power. It is a Power of Falsehood that is making you do and say extravagant things which are not Islamic but a caricature of Islamic faith and action; its intention is to make not only Islam but all spirituality and religion ridiculous through you. It hopes to disturb the divine work upon earth, even if it can only do it a little. It is trying to spoil your brain and destroy your intelligence, to make you say and do foolish and extravagant things and turn you into an object of sorrow and pity for your friends and well-wishers and a laughing-stock to others. If you have any respect for yourself or for God or religion, if you truly hope for the Truth and Light, if you wish for the awakening and salvation of your soul, you must stop speaking and doing these extravagant things and you must throw away the Influence that is now driving you.

23 October 1929

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Your remark of yesterday, "There is no quarrel on the Mother's part, the quarrel is with me", intrigues me. The basis of my quarrel with the Mother is that I do not feel her, so we have no dealings with each other. Whereas you are always with me, so how can there be any quarrel with you? I recognise, of course, my arrogance, egoism and pride in this matter.

If you listen to the inspirations of the Asura against the Mother that brings a quarrel with me—just as if you did anything against me, it will land you in a quarrel with her. It is precisely

this arrogance, egoism and pride that make it difficult for you to feel the Mother.

11 April 1933

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If all that you write against us is correct, there is only one logical conclusion possible that the Mother and myself are a queer combination of impotent imbecile and selfish mean-minded oppressive Asura. Perhaps we are, though I am not yet persuaded to recognise myself or the Mother in the picture. But why do you want to be docile and devoted to such people?

The other conclusion to be gathered from your remarks is that our life work is likely to be and is indeed already a failure because of our insincerity and tyrannical meanness and our leniency and love for the insincere and oppression of the sincere and our unspiritual conduct in all ways. It may be so. I have tried to offer what I felt to be the Light and the Truth to the Earth and her children — if the Earth and her children do not want it or if my Truth is falsehood and my Light is Darkness and Evil in the eyes of men — well, be it so. If there is nothing to be done on earth, the Mother and I can always return into our own Self and see the thing better done by others.

24 April 1933

Misinterpreting Their Words

These doctrines still sound strange to me. I should also be very glad to know of the swift and easy method of Yoga by which all that can be done in a few years — or else not at all, for that seems to be your alternative. What I see in this Asram is that people catch hold of something said or written by the Mother, give it an interpretation other than or far beyond its true meaning and deduce from it a crudely extreme logical conclusion which is quite contrary to our knowledge and experience. If we protest against these crude ideas being put upon us, the “disciples” cling to their own deductions and delusions and push aside our protests as inconsistent with what we have once said, insincere or unintelligible. The Mother has long ago given up trying to correct these things, for she finds that they do not listen to

her but to something in their own minds which they follow and announce as hers. I still sometimes try, but with no great success. As for the logical conclusion drawn — well! It is natural, I suppose, and part of the game. It is so much easier to come to vehement simple logical conclusions than to look at the truth as it is, many-sided and whole.

16 April 1935

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I have always told you that you should not take what any sadhak says or thinks as authoritative or coming from me or the Mother. Even when they say that it is from me or her, it cannot be accepted, for it is often an idea of their own minds which they “think” to be ours also or a onesided misunderstanding of what we may have said in a particular connection but which their minds apply to something with which it was not connected or to all things in general. But when they simply write to you their own ideas without referring to us at all, why on earth should you suppose or imagine that it comes from us? I know nothing of what X wrote to you, except from your own letter. What X writes is X’s, we must not be held responsible for it. For that matter no sadhak, whoever he or she may be, can stand for us in our place or speak for us. Each must be taken as speaking on his own account his own thought or feeling.

3 June 1937

Criticisms, Humility and Faith

First of all, why get upset by such slight things, a phrase in a poem, a tap on the head of doubt? I do not see at all why you should take it as a personal assault on yourself. It is clear from the poems themselves that they are not an assault but a riposte. Some have been criticising and ridiculing X’s faith and his sadhana, there have been criticisms and attacks on the Mother indicating that it is absurd to think of her as divine. X justifies his faith in his own way — and in doing so hits back at the critics and scorners. No doubt, he ought not to do so, he ought to disregard it all, as we have told him to more than once. But it is a hard rule to follow for a militant enthusiasm endowed

with a gift of expression. But what is there in all that to affect you who do not gibe at faith, even if you yourself doubt, and do not attack or criticise the Mother.

As for the sense of superiority, that too is a little difficult to avoid when greater horizons open before the consciousness, unless one is already of a saintly and humble disposition. There are men like Nag Mahashoy in whom spiritual experience creates more and more humility, there are others like Vivekananda in whom it erects a giant sense of strength and superiority — European critics have taxed him with it rather severely; there are others in whom it fixes a sense of superiority to men and humility to the Divine. Each position has its value. Take Vivekananda's famous answer to the Madras Pundit who objected to one of his assertions, "But Shankara does not say so." To which Vivekananda replied, "No, Shankara does not say so, but I, Vivekananda, say so", and the Pundit sank back amazed and speechless. That "I, Vivekananda" stands up to the ordinary eye like a Himalaya of self-confident egoism. But there was nothing false or unsound in Vivekananda's spiritual experience. This was not mere egoism, but the sense of what he stood for and the attitude of the fighter who, as the representative of something very great, could not allow himself to be put down or belittled. This is not to deny the necessity of non-egoism and of spiritual humility, but to show that the question is not so easy as it appears at first sight. For if I have to express my spiritual experiences, I must do it with truth — I must record them, their *bhāva*, the thoughts, feelings, extensions of consciousness which accompany them. What can I do with the experience in which one feels the whole world in oneself or the force of the Divine flowing in one's being and nature or the certitude of one's faith against all doubts and doubters or one's oneness with the Divine or the smallness of human thought and life compared with this greater knowledge and existence? And I have to use the word "I" — I cannot take refuge in saying "this body" or "this appearance", — especially as I am not a Mayavadin. Shall I not inevitably fall into expressions which will make X shake his head at my assertions as full of pride and ego? I imagine it would be difficult to avoid it.

Another thing, it seems to me that you identify faith very much with mental belief — but real faith is something spiritual, a knowledge of the soul. The assertions you quote in your letter are the hard assertions of a mental belief leading to a great vehement assertion of one's creed and god because they are one's own and must therefore be greater than those of others — an attitude which is universal in human nature. Even the atheist is not tolerant, but declares his credo of Nature and Matter as the only truth and on all who disbelieve it or believe in other things he pours scorn as unenlightened morons and superstitious half-wits. I bear him no grudge for thinking me that; but I note that this attitude is not confined to religious faith but is equally natural to those who are free from religious faith and do not believe in Gods or Gurus.

I don't think that real faith is so very superabundant in this Asram. There are some who have it, but for the most part I have met not only doubt, but sharp criticism, constant questioning, much mockery of faith and spiritual experience, violent attacks on myself and the Mother — and that has been going on for the last fourteen years and more. Things are not so bad as they were, but there is plenty of it left still, and I do not think the time has come when the danger of an excessive faith is likely to take body.

You will not, I hope, mind my putting the other side of the question. I simply want to point out that there is this other side, that there is much more to be said than at first sight appears, and the moral of it all is that one must bear with what calm and philosophy one can the conflicts of opposing tendencies in this welter of the Asram atmosphere and wait till the time has come when a greater Light and with it some true Harmony can purify and unite and recreate.

28 June 1934

Taking on the Sadhaks' Difficulties

I thank you for a perfect night of rest and repose. I felt your presence throughout the night. Was it merely by your presence that the disquiet was dismissed as the rising sun dispels the

night's darkness? Or do you take upon yourself the disquiet as some yogis do to relieve their disciples?

No, I don't take them on myself — though sometimes they try to throw themselves on me, but that is from the general atmosphere. The method of taking upon oneself had its utility at one time (the Mother used always to do it); but it is useful no longer. The thing has to be driven out, its right to remain altogether denied.

25 November 1932

Dealing with the Sadhaks

It is very silly and childish to have *abhimāna*; for it means that you expect everyone including the Mother and myself to act always according to your ideas and do what you want us to do and never do anything which will not please you! It is for the Mother to do whatever she finds to be right or necessary; you must understand that; otherwise you will always be making yourself miserable for nothing.

28 April 1932

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It is no question of fault or punishment — if we have to condemn and punish people for their faults, and deal with the sadhaks like a tribunal of justice, no sadhana could be possible. I do not see how your reproach against us is justifiable. Our sole duty to the sadhaks is to take them towards their spiritual realisation — we cannot behave like the head of a family intervening in domestic quarrels, supporting one, putting our weight against the other! However often X may stumble we have to take him by the hand, lift him up again and get him to move once more towards the Divine. We have always done the same with you. But we could not support any demand of yours upon him. We have always treated it as something between him and the Divine. For you, the one thing we have insisted on and that with your full consent and with your prayers to us to be helped in doing it, is to cut the vital relation with him altogether and to base nothing upon it any more. Yet now you write to us that because we have not approved of your action of what you

said to Y, no matter what that might be,—you renounce us forever.

I must ask you to return to your better self and your true consciousness and throw off these moods of vital passion which are unworthy of your soul. You have repeatedly written of your love for the Mother, the Ananda which you received from her and the number of spiritual experiences. Remember that and remember that that is your true way and your true being and nothing else matters. Get back your poise and throw off the lower nature and its darkness and ignorance. 29 March 1933

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The Mother and myself deal with all according to the law of the Divine. We receive alike rich and poor, those who are high-born or low-born according to human standards, and extend to them an equal love and protection. Their progress in sadhana is our main concern — for they have come here for that, not to satisfy their palates or their bellies, not to make ordinary vital demands or to quarrel about position or place or comforts. That progress depends on how they answer to the Mother's love or protection — whether they receive the forces she pours on all alike, whether they use or misuse what she gives them. But the Mother has no intention or obligation to deal with all outwardly in the same way — the demand that she should do so is absurd and imbecile — and if she did it, she would prove false to the truth of things and the law of the Divine. Each sadhak has to be dealt with according to his nature, his capacities, his real needs (not his claims or desires) and according to what is best for his spiritual welfare. As to how it is to be done, we refuse to be dictated to by the ignorance of those of the sadhaks who consider that the Mother must act according to their standards or their ideas of equality or justice or the demands of their vital or the notions they have brought with them from the outside world. We act according to the Light within us and for the Truth that we are striving to establish in this earthly Nature. 11 December 1933

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The human consciousness is made of many materials and all cannot bear quickly a constant spiritual endeavour — they have to be trained, enlightened, changed in their habits. That is why the Mother and I always give time for the soul to grow upon the other parts and we do not mind if it takes time, provided there is a central sincerity and will — as certainly there is in you. Do not be impatient or easily discouraged because things do not go fast. Aspire, try to keep yourself in the sunshine of confidence and let the seed grow.

18 June 1934

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X told me that Y has been insulting him often. But why does he allow himself to be insulted so badly that he has to go to his room and weep over it? Of course it is because he is afraid of bringing things down to the physical level and breaking them. But X also seems to have a good deal of hatred for Y and others too. How long can these hatreds be contained? What can be done for either of these men?

Each has to get rid of his wrong reactions — they are here for that. What other remedy is there? If they are not prepared to do that, then we remain on the ground of the ordinary life where one has to do as in a big family, intervening in quarrels, reconciling, soothing, rebuking, punishing, lecturing, somehow getting things going until the next clash. There is no end to that and we gave it up long ago. Each must mend himself — there is no other way out of it.

17 June 1935

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From your answers to me it seems that the tamasic and rajasic elements of my nature have been at work for a long time and it will now take more time to get rid of them. But since you saw these wrong things entering me, would it not have been better to warn me of their intrusion so that I could keep a vigilant eye on them?

Here again is the rajasic ego in you dictating to us what we should have done and showing us our mistakes.

14 October 1935

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A suggestion sometimes comes to me: "As Mother has become stricter with you at pranam, so Sri Aurobindo is becoming stricter with you in his letters." Is what I have written all right?

You attributed too many motives — e.g. that the Mother tries to allure the vital by indulging it in the beginning. She has no such intention. She behaves naturally and simply with the being — whatever change there is in the vital's impressions about her action rather than in the action itself — except in so far as there is a change necessitated by the change in the consciousness. Formerly you were writing from the higher mind mostly, but partly from the vital — the vital was often dissatisfied with my answers, so I ceased answering to it and wrote only what would help your higher mind and psychic. Now it is from the physical mind and vital that you often write and so my answers must be to them and they feel they are not given the answers they want or in the tone of indulgence they would like. But to satisfy and indulge them would not be helpful to your sadhana.

9 December 1935

*

It seemed to me that the Mother did not respond to my smile yesterday and that she put unnecessary pressure on me in regard to X's letter. And when you replied to my note in the evening with a simple "all right", I felt a terrible emptiness and a want of sympathy. It seemed as if your "all right" was also a sort of pressure in regard to X's letter.

The Mother put no pressure whatever about X's letter and there was no reason why she should do so. As for myself, I never even thought of it when I wrote the "all right". The word "pressure" besides is an entirely wrong one to use; the only thing we put is a supporting force to help you in your difficulties or else to bring down more peace and more of the higher consciousness. I do not see how that can be described as an unnecessary pressure or produce bad consequences. But the idea that we were displeased about X's letter or withdrew our support or were putting any kind of pressure about it is absolutely groundless. You ought not

to make constructions of the mind like that or believe in them; for it is always these wrong constructions that upset you.

5 June 1936

*

Unfortunately X seems to think that the Mother is harder than you: she is grim and does not love etc.

That is because Mother's pressure for change is always strong — even when she does not put it as force it is there by the very nature of the Divine Energy in her.

11 March 1937

Awareness of the Sadhaks' Movements

You and the Mother know what is going on in us, how and what we are aspiring for, how our nature is reacting to your help and guidance. What is then the necessity of writing all that to you?

It is necessary for you to be conscious, and to put your self-observation before us; it is on that that we can act. A mere action on our own observation without any corresponding consciousness on the part of the sadhak would lead to nothing.

7 January 1936

*

I thought that it is not possible for us to have spiritual experiences, especially major ones, without your previously knowing that so-and-so is having such-and-such an experience.

Previously? My God, we would have to spend all our time prevising the sadhaks' experiences. Do you think Mother has nothing else to do? As for myself, I never previse anything, I only vise and revise. All that Mother prevised was that there was something not right in X, some part of him at odds with his aspiration. That might lead to trouble. That is why, *entre nous*, I want him to find out what part of him didn't want the descent.

18 October 1936

Their Knowledge of Human Nature

Sometimes we feel that your answers (not so much the Mother's) come from such a high plane that they seem to have no connection with our lives and do not consider the dualities, weaknesses, ignorance, etc. of human nature. Is it because it is a plane or planes of eternal and infinite Light, Power, Ananda, infallible Will-Force, which sees the human plane in the same way?

I think I know as much about the dualities, weaknesses, ignorance of human nature as you do and a great deal more. The idea that the Mother or I are spiritually great but ignorant of everything practical seems to be common in the Asram. It is an error to suppose that to be on a high spiritual plane makes one ignorant or unobservant of the world or of human nature. If I know nothing of human nature or do not consider it, I am obviously unfit to be anybody's guide in the work of transformation, for nobody can transform human nature if he does not know what human nature is, does not see its workings or, even if he sees, does not take them into consideration at all. If I think that the human plane is like the plane or planes of infinite Light, Power, Ananda, infallible Will-Force, then I must be either a stark lunatic or a gibbering imbecile or a fool so abysmally idiotic as to be worth keeping in a museum as an exhibit. I am glad however to know that this is the opinion that you and all the other members of the Asram (I suppose this is what "we" means) have about me. I am glad however to know that you think the Mother is less of an exalted imbecile than myself.

30 April 1937

Their Patience

I am overwhelmed at the patience and compassion with which you put up with our insincerities, disobediences and loosenesses.

Human nature is like that in its very grain; so if we are not patient, there would be little hope of its changing. But there is

something else in the human being which is sincere and can be a force for the change. The difficulty in people like X is to get at that something (it is so covered up) and get it to act.

8 July 1934

Their Help

Well, what an amazing mass of extraordinary mental constructions you have built up about the Mother and myself! The Mother is a great Yogi of a rather grave and impersonal type! I am Vedantic and vast and cosmic and impersonal and what not! What not indeed! Nothing is impossible after that!! However, I won't protest — for mental constructions are to the mind like his favourite productions to an author, the more you criticise them the more the mind clings to them. Let me point out however by example how they come unnecessarily in your way and how very unnecessarily you let them do that, so that my insistence — in *The Mother* or elsewhere — on getting rid of mental constructions is not so groundless after all. The Mother told you very simply that if you prayed to her (your prayers to Krishna having according to you no effect) you would have received quicker help. That was simply to help you — she is here close to you and the others and any number here have received help by calling to her simply and directly, of course without any questions or misgivings. Even now there are several who are emerging out of the same illness as yours, a habit of many years of long attacks of black despondency with the usual round of suggestions, "unfitness, this Yoga hopeless for me, no response, no experience, the Divine does not love me, Mother is distant and far, how long can I go on, how can anyone live like this, running away, suicide etc.," and they are emerging because they have suddenly managed to turn simply and directly towards her. So what the Mother said was not something unfounded and a mere idea of hers. But it was simply a suggestion to help you. How did your mind come to the conclusion that it was a command to be followed on pain of displeasure, spiritual hanging or rejection and exile? The habit of mental constructions, that is all. Fear?

But the fear itself is a mental construction which could have no real foundation if you had remembered the constant indulgence and patience the Mother has always shown to you.

*

The doubt about the possibility of help is hardly a rational one, since all the evidence of life and of spiritual experience in the past and of the special experience of those, numerous enough, who have received help from the Mother and myself, is against the idea that no internal or spiritual help from one to another or from a Guru to his disciples or from myself to my disciples is possible. It is therefore not really a doubt arising from the reason but one that comes from the vital and physical mind that is troubling you. The physical mind doubts all that it has not itself experienced and even it doubts what it has itself experienced if that experience is no longer there or immediately palpable to it — the vital brings in the suggestions of despondency and despair to reinforce the doubt and prevent clear seeing. It is therefore a difficulty that cannot be effectively combated by the logical reason alone, but best by the clear perception that it is a self-created difficulty — a self-formed sanskara or mental formation which has become habitual and has to be broken up so that you may have a free mind and vital, free for experience.

As for the help, you expect a divine intervention to destroy the doubt, and the divine intervention is possible, but it comes usually only when the being is ready. You have indulged to a great extreme this habit of the recurrence of doubt, this mental formation or sanskara, and so the adverse force finds it easy to throw it upon you, to bring back the suggestion. You must have a steady working will to repel it whenever it comes and to refuse the tyranny of the sanskara of doubt — to annul the force of its recurrence. I think you have hardly done that in the past, you have rather supported the doubts when they came. So for some time at least you must do some hard work in the opposite direction. The help (I am not speaking of a divine intervention from above but of my help and the Mother's) will be there. It can be effective in spite of your physical mind, but it will be more

effective if this steady working will of which I speak is there as its instrument. There are always two elements in spiritual success — one's own steady will and endeavour and the Power that in one way or another helps and gives the result of the endeavour.

I will do what is necessary to give the help you must receive. To say you cannot would not be true, for you have received times without number and it has helped you to recover.

26 January 1934

*

I don't feel any devotion at all. I think you know how much I suffer and how helpless I am to do anything. Have pity on me, cure me by your Grace. Help me out of this pit of darkness by your mercy.

I will try to do so.

But it is a pity you cannot form the habit and stabilise the power to reject this thing when it comes — for it would mean that the difficulty was practically over and the whole being under the right direction and on the right way. Other difficulties are of minor importance, it is this one thing that is standing obstinately in the way of the soul's deliverance.

I will put my force to pull you out — I hope I shall get the full response.

9 June 1934

*

Something in me is open to you and the Mother, for I can feel Peace coming into me. But I do not see how I can call for your help — selfishness, blindness and distrust of spiritual things are supreme in me.

I do not see why your having difficulties or the external consciousness denying the inner truth should prevent you from calling our help. At that rate hardly anybody could call for help. Almost everybody in the Asram except a few have this difficulty of the external consciousness denying or standing in the way of the inner experience and trying to cling to its old ways, ideas, habits and desires. This division in human nature is a universal fact and one should not make too much of it. Once the Peace

and Power are there, it is best to trust to that to remove in time the opposition and enlighten and occupy the external nature.

19 July 1934

*

We are sorry that you have suffered so much. It was not to hurt you that the Mother put the pressure, but to liberate. It has always been with a deep affection and sympathy with you in your struggles that she has tried to help you. I trust you will recover soon your ease of mind and peace. I will try to give you all the help possible.

23 January 1935

*

The Mother and I will do all to get rid of the cloud which the physical mind presents against the permanent consciousness of your soul's connection with the Mother; but let your thinking mind be firm in its will to be rid of it and to call the aid of our Force.

6 February 1936

*

Last night I got stuck at every stanza and had to send you and Mother frequent S.O.S.'s to rescue me. Do you really receive these signals, or do your impersonal Forces intercept them and do the necessary?

As we receive some hundreds of such signals daily, we are obliged to be impersonal about it, otherwise we would have no time for anything else.

6 November 1938

*

It is very painful for us to see you in this condition and it makes us very sad and anxious. Will you not make an effort and throw off the cloud that has fallen upon you? There is surely something you are not telling us, for nothing has happened to our knowledge that could make you go so far as to refuse food and reject persistently the love and solicitude of the Mother. Will you not tell us what is your reason and relieve your mind of its burden?

You are our beloved child. Nothing should be able to

throw a shadow between you and our love. Throw off whatever shadow there is. I ask you to take your food as usual. Speak to the Mother; turn to us once more; call back the happiness and the sunshine.

Speaking One's Thoughts Freely

X wants me to tell him all my thoughts. Can one tell to others what should be told to you? Since I have not told him everything, he says that I am stubborn and even the Mother finds it difficult to work in me. Is it true that the Mother finds it difficult to work in me?

It is quite unnecessary to say all your thoughts to X and it would not be good either. It is only to the Mother and myself that you can say freely all that is in you, not to anybody else. There is no reason why the Mother's force should not be able to work in you as in others.

Sri Aurobindo's Coming out of Retirement

I want to know clearly whether you have any idea of coming out to lead us and guide us as the Mother did in 1926.

I have no ideas about the matter, no mental decisions; when the time comes, the Mother and I will know what is to be done and do it according to the Truth.

21 November 1932

The Mother and Sri Aurobindo in Dreams, Visions and Experiences

Visions, Dreams and Experiences of Their Unity

From the intimations frequently received from the play of lights seen in visions, I am having a deep feeling that Sri Aurobindo and the Mother are the same though we see them in different bodies. Is my feeling right?

Yes.

25 April 1933

*

In the centre of the flower “The Supramental manifestation upon earth”, I saw both the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. I saw only their faces and they were in the same figure and at the same time. What does this signify?

It is our joint or united presence in the manifestation.

10 November 1933

*

Today while the Mother was blessing me, I felt Sri Aurobindo’s hand beside the Mother’s hand. But when I opened my eyes, I saw only the Mother sitting there. Why did I experience this? Did Sri Aurobindo come at this time?

I am always with the Mother — it was therefore quite natural that you should feel the double blessing.

17 November 1933

*

The Mother and myself stand for the same Power in two forms — so the perception in the dream was perfectly logical. Ishwara-Shakti, Purusha-Prakriti are only the two sides of the one Divine (Brahman).

1933

*

It is a very common experience—that of the identity between myself and the Mother (the perception that we are one) expressed in the fusing of the two images. 4 November 1935

Other Dreams and Experiences

Is there any significance in Mother's standing on the right side and your standing on the left in my experience?

Yes, she is the executive power and must have the right arm free for action. The symbolism which puts her on the left side belongs to the Ignorance. In the Ignorance she is on the left side, not free in her action, all is a wrong action or half result. For the supramental work the true symbol is the Mother on the right side.

20 February 1932

*

While meditating today I received the Mother's peace and light and joy. Then for a short time I went deep inside and suddenly saw a tiger standing in front of me. Seeing the tiger, I kept calling the Mother and went near it. Then the tiger vanished and in its place stood a very beautiful boy and girl. A blue light came out from the boy's body and a white light from the girl's. They told me, "Let us go to the infinite God." I was walking with them and then I woke up. Who was the tiger and the boy and girl? Why did they tell me that?

The tiger is some force that appears hostile. If you face it with the Mother's name, the hostile force disappears and in its place come two Powers (the children) from myself (the blue light) and the Mother (the white light). It is probably an image of the vital under the influence of the psychic. At first it is inhabited by the tiger (anger, passion, desire etc.)—but as soon as the psychic influence masters it, that disappears and it is replaced by the Divine Children calling you to the Divine. 3 April 1933

*

When I look into the tuberose flowers which are growing

on our terrace, I sometimes see Sri Aurobindo's figure and sometimes the Mother's and sometimes both together.

It is the flower of the new creation, so it is natural that you see us there.

6 November 1933

*

The dream was an indication of what the Mother and myself are and represent—I do not think that it is necessary to say more than that. It indicates that the fulfilment of what we stand for is the Divine Love and Ananda.

1933

*

On Darshan Day and the day before it I felt an intense love for you and for the Mother. It possessed my whole being for some time. There was a high and profound reverence for both of you and "a happiness that no worldly pleasure can give us".

That is obviously psychic.

25 August 1934

*

In my dream two nights ago, I bowed down to a dark-complexioned gentleman who was the devil, and devotionally too! How to discriminate before such a thing is done? Powers come to allure one and it is harmful to accept them, but how to recognise them? And in this case I recognised that this devil did not resemble you, but still I bowed. Sometimes in dream we have met the Mother in quite a different appearance, and still you said it was the Mother who came to us. Then?

Necessarily, Mother can manifest in many other forms besides her physical one, and though I am rather less multitudinous, I can also. But that does not mean that you can take any gentleman for me or any she for her. Your dream-self has to develop a certain discrimination. That discrimination cannot go by signs and forms, for the vital beggars can imitate almost anything, it must be intuitive.

23 May 1935

*

Well, it is quite natural that I should like to write rather about the Mother than about myself. But I suppose you refer to the experience with the photograph — it can be had of course with mine also, but it comes more easily with the Mother's because her physical contact with the sadhaks is closer than mine.

The feeling of being a child comes often when there is the psychic influence behind.

4 May 1936

*

My being meets you or the Mother in dreams and receives your blessings. Has it any concrete value — as concrete as the Pranam touch?

What do you mean by concrete? It is concrete there just as the Abyssinian or Spanish wars are concrete here. 26 August 1936

*

X wishes to know what you and the Mother decide in reply to her last letter. She asked me to write to her. Shall I ask Mother tomorrow or would you prefer to write what I am to communicate to her?

I think I had better write it and you can communicate to her. It was an experience in a conscious dream in which she was becoming as if unconscious and her body was benumbed and then felt my hand on her forehead, the weight felt not only there but as if something was crushing her whole body, particularly a distinct pressure on the 3rd or 4th rib on the right side. The numbness was still there when she opened her eyes. She thinks it was my hand because of the weight, the strength of it. She wants to know also about our presence, how it comes, whether we are conscious of the call or it is only our Force that is working which is everywhere without the necessity of our personal knowledge. This is the answer.

“As to the dream, it was not a dream but an experience of the inner being in a conscious dream state, *svapna-samādhi*. The numbness and the feeling of being about to lose consciousness are always due to the pressure or descent of a Force to

which the body is not accustomed, but feels strongly. Here it was not the physical body that was being directly pressed, but the subtle body, the *sūkṣma śarīra* in which the inner being more intimately dwells and in which it goes out in sleep or trance or in the moment of death. But the physical body in these vivid experiences feels as if it were itself that was having the experience; the numbness was the effect on it of the pressure. The pressure on the whole body would mean a pressure on the whole inner consciousness, perhaps for some modification or change which would make it more ready for knowledge or experience; the 3rd or 4th rib would indicate a region which belongs to the vital nature, the domain of the life-force, some pressure for a change there.

The strength of the hand, the weight would not necessarily indicate that it was mine—for it was an experience not of the physical hand or in the physical body, but in the subtle realms of the being and there the Mother's touch and pressure might well be stronger and heavier than mine. The Mother does not remember the date, but one night about that period she was thinking strongly about her and putting a pressure for the removal of some obstacle to a spiritual opening. It is possible that this was what produced the experience. If it was myself, it must have been at a time when I was concentrating and sending the force to different people, but I remember nothing precise. I have often thought of her of course and sent a Force to help her.

It is not necessary for us always to be physically conscious of the action, for it is often carried out when the mind is occupied with outward things or when we sleep. The Mother's sleep is not sleep but an inner consciousness, in which she is in communication with people or working everywhere. At the time she is aware, but she does not carry all that always into her waking consciousness or in her memory. A call would come in the occupied waking mind as the thought of the person coming—in a more free or in a concentrated state as a communication from the person in question; in concentration or in sleep or trance she would see the person coming and speaking to her or

herself going there. Besides that wherever the Force is working,
the Presence is there.”

27 September 1936

*

It is quite normal in dream to see the Mother or myself with
another appearance than the present. These dreams are experi-
ences on the vital plane where forms are not so rigid as in the
physical world.

1 June 1937

Section Three

The Mother and the Practice of the Integral Yoga

Aspiration and Surrender to the Mother

Yoga, Sadhana, Dhyana

Yoga is union with the Divine, sadhana is what you do in order to unite with the Divine. You have to get away from the ordinary human consciousness and get into touch with the divine Consciousness.

For that call always on the Mother, open yourself to her, aspire and pray for her Force to work in you so as to make you fit—reject desire, restlessness, disturbances of the mind and vital. Dhyana means to make the mind and vital quiet and concentrate in aspiration for the Mother's Peace, the Mother's Presence, her Light, Force and Ananda.

10 October 1933

Aspiration

Nowadays I feel utterly disturbed and upset. Wherever there is disturbance or confusion I take my consciousness away from it. I have a kind of faith, but there is nothing regular or systematic in it. My mind has wandered very much trying to find the true way of doing sadhana.

It is only by constantly aspiring to the Mother's light and force that you can make true and steady progress. It is only by the constant repetition and persistence of the Mother's light and force that the habit of disturbance and lack of organisation can diminish and finally disappear. Only so can the lower being be prepared and the decisive descent of the Truth and Light be finally made possible.

23 August 1931

*

The Mother's Peace is above you — by aspiration and quiet self-opening it descends. When it takes hold of the vital and the body,

then equanimity becomes easy and in the end automatic.

28 August 1933

*

O Mother, come down in me. So many times I have promised to offer myself to you, and every time the promise has been broken, leaving me suspended in the air. But if I am reminded of my unfitness, what shall I do? I can't do anything.

The fitness comes with the aspiration.

15 March 1934

*

Please give your Grace to this unfortunate lady, whose letter I enclose. Be kind enough to instruct me what I should write to her. She prays for your *upadeśa* and blessings.

But it is not by *upadeśa* that this sadhana is given or carried on. It is only those who are capable by aspiration and meditation on the Mother to open and receive her action and working within that can succeed in this Yoga.

21 June 1937

*

Let the power of the Mother work in you, but be careful to avoid any mixture or substitution, in its place, of either a magnified ego-working or a force of Ignorance presenting itself as Truth. Aspire especially for the elimination of all obscurity and unconsciousness in the nature.

Aspiration and the Psychic

Nowadays I often get psychic feelings and gratitude. Then the aspiration comes to concentrate above, as I was doing some days back. But from time to time I get the feeling that I should not change the form of my meditation and aspiration so frequently. Should I stick to one form of practice or should the form of practice be allowed to change naturally according to the Light that descends?

To be in contact with the Mother's Light and Force is the one important thing (fundamental) to which you must aspire. For

this the psychic feeling is the indispensable condition; for it is through the psychic that this contact becomes easy and natural. It gives the psychic basis. Once the basis is there firmly established the rest can be done according to need and it will be much better done, because then there will be the safety from hostile attack and the right guidance.

12 November 1930

The Psychic Fire and Offering

I saw a fire in my heart and my offering falling into it like bits of paper. I heard someone say: "Offer everything into the fire!" But when obscurities and resistance arise, I feel a hesitation to offer them to the Mother. The thought comes: offer the best things to the Mother, not ugly things.

The fire is the purifying psychic fire. Offering to the psychic fire is not contrary to the worship of the Mother. To purify all in the psychic fire rather than throw the obscurities and resistance on the Mother is obviously the right way.

9 June 1936

Aspiration, Rejection, Surrender

What you say of sadhana is true. Sadhana is necessary and the Divine Force cannot do things in the void but must lead each one according to his nature to the point at which he can feel the Mother working within and doing all for him. Till then the sadhak's aspiration, self-consecration, assent and support to the Mother's workings, his rejection of all that comes in the way is very necessary — indispensable.

25 September 1936

*

It is quite true that aspiration, rejection and the remembrance of the Mother and surrender to her and union with her consciousness are the main means of the sadhana. It is also true that to seek the supramental for oneself by one's own means is a folly; that I have said from the beginning and emphasised it recently more and more. It is true also that to make the union with the Divine the cardinal aim and all the rest subsidiary

and a consequence of it, not to seek progress, experiences, etc. for their own sake or for the sake of the ego is the proper attitude for the sadhak. It is true finally that meditation, vision and almost all else in the Yoga can be misused if the sadhak is self-centred, egoistic and obscure. But that does not mean that meditation, vision etc. are of no use and should be avoided in the sadhana.

The theory that once you remember the Mother always, everything you do flows from the Divine and therefore it does not matter what you do is rather a dangerous one. It may end by giving sanction instead of rejection to many things that ought to go out of the nature.

As for living a free outer life it cannot be said that that is good for everybody at every stage any more than living a retired life is good for everybody or at every stage. The disadvantage of a free jolly outward social life without restrictions is that one becomes entirely or mostly externalised and that all sorts of vital interchanges are part of it which can hamper the inner growth or the total self-consecration to the Divine. The disadvantage of too complete a retirement is that it makes the person one-sided and shut up in himself, subjective, without the stabilising contact with earth and consequently with the danger of morbidity and self-delusion. A middle path with the rule of living more and more within, standing back from outward things but not throwing them aside, looking at them with a new consciousness, a new view and acting on them from this inner consciousness is the best way. But there is need for some at some stages to minimise outward contacts without abolishing them during part of the process of this shifting of the consciousness. No absolute rule can be laid down in this matter.

14 October 1936

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I always thought that in other Yogas seekers first had to undergo a rigorous disciplined period of 12 years of Brahmacharya, and only when the Guru certified their physical, vital, mental immunity were they allowed to enter into its practical course.

Never heard of this 12 years affair or of any certificate. Perhaps in European occultism there are noviciates, stages, ordeals, grades etc. In India the Guru gives a mantra as soon as he accepts a disciple and tells him to go ahead with it. We have no mantra except the Mother's name. But usually we give work, tell them to aspire, reject, open to the Mother. I don't know whether you call that the practical course. Anyhow people have got into difficulties here even without any practical course, most while doing their "twelve years" and in some cases we have had to push them into active sadhana as the only way to control the lower forces and get them out of it.

Here the merry lot fancy they can do all manner of things.

What things? I find only a small minority doing anything at all except gossiping, discussing, quarrelling, complaining etc. etc. A certain number do the aspiration, rejection, Motherward turn — but nothing more. They have enough difficulty with that even.

Even when strenuous measures are adopted for practising the nearest approximation to real Yoga, ought not there to be a question of a triple fitness first?

How are they to develop it without any sadhana? Just by sitting still? No one has it to start with.

20 October 1936

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The effort demanded of the sadhak is that of aspiration, rejection and surrender. If these three are done the rest is to come of itself by the Grace of the Mother and the working of her force in you. But of the three the most important is surrender of which the first necessary form is trust and confidence and patience in difficulty. There is no rule that trust and confidence can only remain if aspiration is there. On the contrary, when even aspiration is not there because of the pressure of inertia, trust and confidence and patience can remain. If trust and patience fail when aspiration is quiescent, that would mean that the sadhak is relying solely on his own effort — it would mean, "Oh, my aspiration has failed,

so there is no hope for me. My aspiration fails, so what can Mother do?" On the contrary, the sadhak should feel, "Never mind, my aspiration will come back again. Meanwhile I know that the Mother is with me even when I do not feel her; she will carry me even through the darkest period." That is the fully right attitude you must have. To those who have it depression can do nothing; even if it comes it has to return baffled. That is not tamasic surrender. Tamasic surrender is when one says, "I won't do anything; let Mother do everything. Aspiration, rejection, surrender even are not necessary. Let her do all that in me." There is a great difference between the two attitudes. One is that of the shirker who won't do anything, the other is that of the sadhak who does his best, but when he is reduced to quiescence for a time and things are adverse, keeps always his trust in the Mother's force and presence behind all and by that trust baffles the opposition force and calls back the activity of the sadhana.

26 October 1936

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How long will it take for all the parts of my being to turn to and surrender to the Mother?

It depends on yourself — if there is a strong aspiration and quiet persistence, it can be done soon.

Surrender to the Mother

There is not much spiritual meaning in keeping open to the Mother if you withhold your surrender. Self-giving or surrender is demanded of those who practise this Yoga, because without such a progressive surrender of the being it is quite impossible to get anywhere near the goal. To keep open means to call in her Force to work in you, and if you do not surrender to it, it amounts to not allowing the Force to work in you at all or else only on condition that it will work in the way you want and not in its own way which is the way of the Divine Truth. A suggestion of this kind is usually made by some adverse Power or by some

egoistic element of mind or vital which wants the Grace or the Force, but only in order to use it for its own purpose, and is not willing to live for the Divine Purpose, — it is willing to take from the Divine all it can get, but not to give itself to the Divine. The soul, the true being, on the contrary, turns towards the Divine and is not only willing but eager and happy to surrender.

In this Yoga one is supposed to go beyond every mental idealistic culture. Ideas and ideals belong to the mind and are half-truths only; the mind too is, more often than not, satisfied with merely having an ideal, with the pleasure of idealising, while life remains always the same, untransformed or changed only a little and mostly in appearance. The spiritual seeker does not turn aside from the pursuit of realisation to mere idealising; not to idealise, but to realise the Divine Truth is always his aim, either beyond or in life also—and in the latter case it is necessary to transform mind and life which cannot be done without surrender to the action of the Divine Force, the Mother.

To seek after the Impersonal is the way of those who want to withdraw from life, but usually they try by their own effort, and not by an opening of themselves to a superior Power or by the way of surrender; for the Impersonal is not something that guides or helps, but something to be attained and it leaves each man to attain it according to the way and capacity of his nature. On the other hand by an opening and surrender to the Mother one can realise the Impersonal and every other aspect of Truth also.

The surrender must necessarily be progressive. No one can make the complete surrender from the beginning, so it is quite natural that when one looks into oneself, one should find its absence. That is no reason why the principle of surrender should not be accepted and carried out steadily from stage to stage, from field to field, applying it successively to all the parts of the nature.

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It is necessary if you want to progress in your sadhana that you should make the submission and surrender of which you speak

sincere, real and complete. This cannot be as long as you mix up your desires with your spiritual aspiration. It cannot be as long as you cherish vital attachment to family, child or anything or anybody else. If you are to do this Yoga, you must have only one desire and aspiration, to receive the spiritual Truth and manifest it in all your thoughts, feelings, actions and nature. You must not hunger after any relations with anyone. The relations of the sadhaka with others must be created for him from within, when he has the true consciousness and lives in the Light. They will be determined within him by the power and will of the Divine Mother according to the supramental Truth for the divine life and the divine work; they must not be determined by his mind and his vital desires. This is the thing you have to remember. Your psychic being is capable of giving itself to the Mother and living and growing in the Truth; but your lower vital being has been full of attachments and sanskaras and an impure movement of desire and your external physical mind was not able to shake off its ignorant ideas and habits and open to the Truth. That was the reason why you were unable to progress, because you were keeping up an element and movements which could not be allowed to remain; for they were the exact opposite of what has to be established in a divine life. The Mother can only free you from these things, if you really want it, not only in your psychic being, but in your physical mind and all your vital nature. The sign will be that you no longer cherish or insist on your personal notions, attachments or desires, and that whatever the distance or wherever you may be, you will feel yourself open and the power and presence of the Mother with you and working in you and will be contented, quiet, confident, wanting nothing else, awaiting always the Mother's will.

6 January 1928

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However hard the fight, the only thing is to fight it out now and here to the end.

The trouble is that you have never fully faced and conquered the real obstacle. There is in a very fundamental part of your nature a strong formation of ego-individuality which has

mixed in your spiritual aspiration a clinging element of pride and spiritual ambition. This formation has never consented to be broken up in order to give place to something more true and divine. Therefore, when the Mother has put her force upon you or when you yourself have pulled the force upon you, this in you has always prevented it from doing its work in its own way. It has begun itself building according to the ideas of the mind or some demand of the ego, trying to make its own creation in its "own way", by its own strength, its own sadhana, its own tapasya. There has never been here any real surrender, any giving up of yourself freely and simply into the hands of the Divine Mother. And yet that is the only way to succeed in the supramental Yoga. To be a Yogi, a Sannyasi, a Tapaswi is not the object here. The object is transformation, and the transformation can only be done by a force infinitely greater than your own; it can only be done by being truly like a child in the hands of the Divine Mother.

7 June 1928

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A lady has written a letter to me. She has been attracted to follow this path. She seems to be in affliction and so she wants peace. Shall I reply to her?

You can write to her briefly — telling her that the life of sansar is in its nature a field of unrest — to go through it in the right way one has to offer one's life and actions to the Divine and pray for the peace of the Divine within. When the mind becomes quiet, one can feel the Divine Mother supporting the life and put everything into her hands — these are the first things to do, if she wants to have peace.

16 April 1933

*

In these moods the thoughts that assail you are so much out of focus! The essence of surrender is not to ask the Mother before doing anything — but to accept whole-heartedly the influence and the guidance, when the joy and peace come down to accept them without question or cavil and let them grow, when the

Force is felt at work to let it work without opposition, when the Knowledge is given to receive and follow it, when the Will is revealed to make oneself its instrument. It is also, no doubt, to accept the guidance and control of the Guru who is at least supposed to know better than oneself what is or is not the Truth and the way to the Truth. All that is nothing very terrible, it is simple common sense. As to the particular kind of control you speak of, it is not imposed on anybody; it is only a few in the Asram who at all follow any such rule. X whom you mention would not have dreamed a year or two ago of asking the Mother before doing anything; if he does so now, it is not because the Mother told him to do so or "imposed" it on him, but because he felt the need for it for his sadhana. The Mother never imposed any rule on Y; he made his own rule of life of his own accord according to his own perception of the best way for him to concentrate and took the sanction of the Mother. You yourself were told by the Mother that you had no need to do what Z was trying to do in this respect at that time of her own motion — that for each it was only when he felt the need that he should do it. I do not see therefore why you should fear so much for your liberty — when in the whole Asram of 120 people there are hardly half a dozen who follow any such rule of strict external surrender. And I cannot understand what you mean by the reproach that we have made some people stiff and speechless. Who are they? X, Y, A? As far as I know, they are quite indefatigable and eloquent or fluent talkers. I am guiltless of the crime you charge against me.

Another thing let me correct. It is not at all correct to say that we — in this instance the Mother, never warned B and C of their deterioration — they were warned and plainly warned and also of the influences from outside the Asram to which they were succumbing. The Mother had even foreseen from the beginning that this might happen and put them on their guard in due time. If they fell, it was because they preferred to follow their lower nature and side with the lower forces. The Divine can lead, he does not drive. There is an internal freedom permitted to every mental being called man to assent or not to assent to the Divine

leading — how else can any real spiritual evolution be done?

If there is so serious an obstacle to your going forward, it consists only of two things, your vital depressions and your mental doubts which make you challenge even the experiences you have and belittle any progress you make. Never have we told you to be stiff and gloomy and speechless — on the contrary we have pressed upon the other side. Other obstacles or difficulties there are, but they could be overcome if these two things were out of the way or rejected and inoperative.

If I constantly encourage you, it is not because I see you deteriorating and want to hide it — I see nothing of the kind, — but because I have faith in your capacities and see the nobler *D* behind all outward weakness. I would not speak what I know to be false — that much credit you can give me.

P. S. What put this into your head that you are regarded as an untouchable and a bad influence? If every man who had difficulties were so regarded, the whole Asram would be an asylum of untouchables.

13 May 1933

*

Sometimes my mental, vital and physical beings work together in harmony. At other times one being dominates the others, and there is disorder. How can this disorder be removed?

The best way is to live in the psychic being, for that is always surrendered to the Mother and can lead the others in the right way. For control one has to centralise somewhere — some do it in the mind or above the mind, others do it in the heart and through the heart in the psychic centre.

11 June 1933

*

Now that you are here, try to enter into the higher ways of the sadhana. Withdraw from the vital and its demands and desires, make the inner heart and the psychic being your centre and seek union with the Mother's consciousness through self-giving and surrender.

22 August 1933

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You have to make your vital single-pointed towards the Mother, peaceful, without demands and desires, aspiring only for surrender and to be one with the Mother's consciousness and filled with her.

24 September 1933

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I can only say—it is your vital you have to change. Make it perfectly straight and clear and pure. Make it free from all selfishness, blindness, insincerity, anger, abhimana, self-indulgence, vital desire—and give it as a pure offering to the Mother.

28 September 1933

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The body as well as all else came from the Mother and has to be surrendered to her as an instrument. That is all that is needed.

15 November 1933

*

Surrender means to look to the Divine Mother only—to reject all desires and do only her will, not to insist on one's own ideas and preferences, but to ask for her Truth only, to obey and follow her guidance, to open oneself and become aware of her Force and its workings and to allow those workings to change the nature into the divine nature.

24 March 1934

*

At present my subnature is still resisting and it is difficult to bring it under permanent control. But why does this difficulty hold on when my lower vital has already put itself in the Mother's hands?

Yes, but it is not enough that the lower vital should put itself into the Mother's hands. The whole physical and subconscious and everything else must do likewise.

4 January 1935

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Put all before the Mother in your heart so that her Light may work on it for the best.

21 April 1935

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If I cannot concentrate or meditate, I simply imagine myself lying eternally in the Mother's lap and going out when she sends me out.

This is the best possible kind of concentration.

12 August 1935

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It is the true attitude so to leave all to the Mother and trust entirely in her and let her lead you on the path to the goal.

2 March 1936

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You have asked me, "How do you surrender to the psychic if you are not conscious of its action?" I do it in the same way that I surrender to the Force above. I simply imagine that there is the Force above or that there is a psychic being in the heart centre. Imagining so, I surrender myself to it.

It is then a *sankalpa* of surrender. But the surrender must be to the Mother — not even to the Force, but to the Mother herself.

But I do not know whether surrender to the psychic is necessary at present. My being is not yet capable of surrendering to the Force and to the psychic simultaneously.

There is no need of all this complication. If the psychic manifests, it will not ask you to surrender to it, but to surrender to the Mother.

4 October 1936

*

I had said that the human vital does not like to be controlled or dominated by another and I said that that also was a reason why sadhaks found it difficult to surrender to the Mother. For the vital wants to affirm its own ideas, impulses, desires, preferences

and to do what it likes, it does not want to feel another force than that of its own nature leading or driving it; but surrender to the Mother means that it must give up all these personal things and allow her Force to guide and drive it in the ways of a higher Truth which are not its own ways: so it resists, does not want to be dominated by the Truth Light and the Mother's Force, insists on its own independence and refuses to surrender.

These ideas of breakdown and personal frustration are again wrong suggestions and the dissatisfaction with yourself is as harmful almost as dissatisfaction with the Mother would be. It prevents the confidence and courage necessary for following the path of the sadhana. You must dismiss these suggestions from you.

8 October 1936

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Frequently when I put a strong suggestion or pressure upon you, your inner being becomes conscious of it and something of it comes to your surface perceptions; but also, usually, your external mind, which is always busy and active trying to take a hand in everything, gives it a wrong turn or twist.

What I wanted you to do was (1) to surrender wholly to the Mother, sincerely, simply and without any reserves of the ego, (2) to become conscious of the habitual defects of your external being and reject them, (3) to open these obscure parts to the light and change their movement.

This was the twist — the mental turn of giving up all reserve — interpreted not as a complete surrender to the Divine Shakti, but as giving yourself up to anything that came, which might very well be a wrong movement of the lower vital Nature or even a hostile force.

I have repeatedly said that this kind of passivity is not the meaning of surrender. You cannot surrender at the same time to the Divine Shakti and to the movements of the lower cosmic Nature. To allow everything as her movement is to contradict the very sense and object of this Yoga. To surrender to the Mother means that you stop giving yourself to these other forces. Therefore discrimination (by the psychic feeling and the seeing

conscious mind, more even than by the thinking part) and rejection are necessary accompaniments and helps to consecration and surrender.

Naturally, with this wrong turn, the first result was that certain things in you to which the mind had refused free outward play but of which you had not been sufficiently conscious or else not able to reject from your nature got their chance and manifested in a very extravagant manner.

Opening, Sincerity and the Mother's Grace

The Meaning of Opening

What is real opening?

It is the receptivity to the Mother's presence and her forces.

What is the right and perfect rule of opening?

Aspiration, quietude, widening of oneself to receive, rejection of all that tries to shut you to the Divine.

How shall I know that I am opening to the Mother and not to other forces?

You have to be vigilant and see that there is no movement of disturbance, desire, ego.

What are the signs of a real opening to the Mother?

That shows itself at once—when you feel the divine peace, equality, wideness, light, Ananda, Knowledge, strength, when you are aware of the Mother's nearness or presence or the working of her Force, etc., etc. If any of these things are felt, it is the opening—the more are felt, the more complete the opening.

What is the way to open all the knots of the being?

By aspiration, by consent of the being to the workings of the Divine Force, by the descent and working of that Force.

25 April 1933

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What does "opening" mean? Is it "not to keep anything secret from the Mother"?

That is the first step towards opening.

17 June 1933

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How does one "open"?

By faith and surrender in a quiet mind.

18 June 1933

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To be open is simply to be so turned to the Mother that her Force can work in you without anything refusing or obstructing her action. If the mind is shut up in its own ideas and refuses to allow her to bring in the Light and the Truth, if the vital clings to its desires and does not admit the true initiative and impulsions that the Mother's power brings, if the physical is shut up in its desire, habits and inertia and does not allow the Light and Force to enter in it and work, then one is not open. It is not possible to be entirely open all at once in all the movements, but there must be a central opening in each part and a dominant aspiration or will in each part (not in the mind alone) to admit only the Mother's workings, the rest will then be progressively done.

28 October 1934

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To remain open to the Mother is to remain always quiet and happy and confident, not restless, not grieving or desponding, to let her force work in you, guide you, give you knowledge, give you peace and Ananda. If you cannot keep yourself open, then aspire constantly but quietly that you may be open.

Opening to the Mother and the Integral Yoga

I cannot understand whether I am doing Yoga. Can it be said that I am doing your Purna Yoga?

Everyone who is turned to the Mother is doing my Yoga. It is a great mistake to suppose that one can "do" the Purna Yoga — i.e. carry out and fulfil all the sides of the Yoga by one's own effort. No human being can do that. What one has to do is to put

oneself in the Mother's hands and open oneself to her by service, by bhakti, by aspiration; then the Mother by her light and force works in him so that the sadhana is done. It is a mistake also to have the ambition to be a big Purna Yogi or a supramental being and ask oneself how far have I got towards that. The right attitude is to be devoted and given to the Mother and to wish to be whatever she wants you to be. The rest is for the Mother to decide and do in you.

April 1929

*

I offer myself at your feet. Accept me as your child and show me the divine path. Give me directions and inform me what will be the attitude in my sadhana.

Write to him¹ that he can begin sadhana, if he feels truly the call. He need do nothing at first but sit in meditation for a short time every day and try to open himself to the Mother's power, aspiring for the opening, for a true change of consciousness, for peace, purity and strength to go through the sadhana, for her protection against all difficulties and errors and for an always increasing devotion. Let him see first if he can thus successfully open himself.

2 November 1929

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Today at soup time I remained concentrated. I felt all kinds of eccentric movements rise up, but they were not in contact with the Mother. Sometimes when I concentrate to get contact with her force and touch, I feel that my head is becoming a solid block, compact, and that my mind has become a vacuum. But I think this prevents the opening and permits attacks from above when the consciousness goes below.

You write always as if all opening must be to the confused mental and vital movements, thoughts, voices etc. That is not so. You can be open in all your being, but to the Mother alone, to the Divine alone and to nothing else.

¹ Written by Sri Aurobindo to his secretary, who replied to the enquirer.—Ed.

When the consciousness is filled with the Mother's force, then there is the condition you speak of as felt in the head — a solid block, compact, silent, free from all random thoughts and movements. But this can be felt not only in the head, but in all the body and also in all the consciousness above, around and below the body. When it is like that then all foreign intrusions are either automatically excluded or if they come, easily observed and rejected as not one's own and not the Divine's. One feels full of the Divine, full of the Mother's force and presence so that nothing else can enter and misuse the mind, the vital or the body.

6 April 1931

*

Sita suffered without Rama, the Gopis without Krishna — how they longed for God! This will not happen to us because you and the Mother are here with us. If this is the Truth, why do we still feel dissatisfied at times? How to establish the Truth in the mind and vital so that we have an end to the feelings of dissatisfaction?

The Truth for you is to feel the Divine in you, open to the Mother and work for the Divine till you are aware of her in all your actions. The physical presence here is not enough; there must be this consciousness of the divine presence in your heart and the divine guidance in your acts. This the psychic being can easily, swiftly, deeply feel if it is fully awake; once the psychic has felt it, it can spread to the mental and vital also.

16 February 1932

*

The advantage of being in the psychic consciousness is that you have the right awareness and its will being in harmony with the Mother's will, you can call in the Mother's Force to make the change. Those who live in the mind and the vital are not so well able to do this; they are obliged to use mostly their personal effort and as the awareness and will and force of the mind and vital are divided and imperfect, the work done is imperfect and not definitive. It is only in the Supermind that Awareness, Will,

Force are always one movement and automatically effective.

7 May 1932

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You have only to aspire, to keep yourself open to the Mother, to reject all that is contrary to her will and to let her work in you — doing also all your work for her and in the faith that it is through her force that you can do it. If you remain open in this way the knowledge and realisation will come to you in due course.

15 May 1932

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Keep yourself open to the Mother in the right attitude of surrender and you will receive from her gradually all that you need within you.

21 November 1932

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I began work on this masonry project a month ago. At first I had only a general idea of the work. Then I got the necessary energy and interest. Now I think that the fourth aspect of the Mother — richness in detail, completeness, perfection — is coming. I await further suggestions.

It is very good. By remaining psychically open to the Mother, all that is necessary for work or sadhana develops progressively, that is one of the chief secrets, the central secret of the sadhana.

13 February 1933

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There is no part of you that is not open, but you have to make the opening always wider and the reception more complete; but that too will be done progressively if you remember and call the Mother's force at all times and remain confident, vigilant and devoted, as you have been and are.

25 February 1933

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Sri Aurobindo says in reply to your letter² that you can meditate on the Mother in the heart and call on her — remember her and

² Written by Sri Aurobindo to his secretary, who replied to the enquirer.—Ed.

dedicate or offer to her all your life and thoughts and actions. If you like you can make a japa of her name. You can call to her to purify your being and change your nature.

Or you can concentrate to call down from above you (where it always is) first her calm and peace, then her power and light and her ananda. It is always there above the head — but super-conscious to the human mind — by aspiration and concentration it can become conscious to it and the adhar can open to it so that it descends and enters into mind, life and body. 14 March 1933

*

If a sadhak even after a long time cannot open himself fully and constantly to the Mother owing to great obstacles in his nature, will he die in the middle and not be accepted by the Mother?

There is no meaning in such a question. Those who follow the Yoga here are accepted by the Mother — for “accepted” means “admitted into the Yoga, accepted as disciples”. But the progress in the Yoga and the siddhi in the Yoga depend on the degree to which there is the opening. 24 June 1933

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Keep open to the Mother — throw away the faults and defects of character you can change of yourself — allow the Mother’s power to work in you — then these difficulties can be made to disappear, the mind will open. 3 May 1934

*

A cloud surrounds me. Protect me and give me strength. Let me open completely to the Mother.

To be open to the Mother *entirely*, you should be open both within and without. You should be perfectly frank and tell her everything — do not shrink from showing to her candidly all that is within you. That will at once enable you to be completely open and her also to help you fully. 22 July 1934

*

I am not getting much time to sit down for meditation, but the calmness is maintained throughout my work. What should I do when I can make no time for meditation?

Keep yourself open, remember the Mother always — call for her help and guidance in your work. You must get into a condition in which not only the calmness remains always but the sadhana is going on all the time in work and rest as well as in meditation.

20 September 1934

*

I understand that once the Mother accepts us as disciples, we should simply go to her. One should not be miserable if one does not see her in the heart. One has only to remain with her in the Asram.

No, it is not enough to be in the Asram — one has to open to the Mother and put away the mud which one was playing with in the world.

25 September 1934

*

I could not decide whether to give up my present work or to change it. Then I thought I will leave the work in order to meditate. But I do not know what is good for me. You alone know everything.

It is a mistake to exercise the mind about these things and try to arrange them with the ordinary mind. It is by confidence in the Mother that the opening needed will come when your consciousness is ready. There is no harm in arranging your present work so that there will be time and energy for some meditation, but it is not by meditation alone that what is needed will come. It is by faith and openness to the Mother.

9 October 1934

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Openness is not always complete from the first — a part of the being opens, other parts of the consciousness remain still closed or half open only — one has to aspire till all is open. Even with the best and most powerful sadhak the full opening takes time;

nor is there anyone who has been able to abandon everything at once without any struggle. There is no reason to feel therefore that if you call, you will not be heard — the Mother knows the difficulties of human nature and will help you through. Persevere always, call always and then after each difficulty there will be a progress.

20 April 1935

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What poise or mode should we keep for the supramental descent?

As for poise or mode — that you need not trouble yourself about. An entire faith, opening, self-giving to the Mother are the one condition necessary throughout.

23 September 1935

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It seems to me that the best place for getting rid of wrong movements is the Asram, under the Mother's grace, help, protection and physical nearness.

That is only true if one can open oneself to the Mother. To be here and shut up to it and under another control does not help.

8 March 1936

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That is what must be done. Trust in the Mother and will only to be open to her always and as quietly confident as may be. The work to be done is too great for the outer mind to understand how it is to be done; it is only by growing light and experience that one day it begins to understand — it is also too great and difficult for it to do by itself, — it can only help the Power that is working by its readiness, aspiration, faith, quietude. But in no sadhak are these things constant — the aspiration gets suspended, the faith wavers, the quietude is disturbed or shaken — but still the Mother is there at work and one has only to persevere, — finally the perseverance will be justified by the result. To give up is the one thing one must never do.

14 May 1936

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That the mind is turning away more and more from outward things and the will to be turned wholly to the Mother is growing is very good, for that is the first necessity. The condition of being so turned and wholly open can then more easily develop. The two minutes' flash of opening showed you how it will come; for it comes like that, by glimpses at first of brief duration, but afterwards it grows in hold and duration till it is ready for permanence. It is a new birth in the nature and so it can't come all at once, but once begun it grows till it is perfect. Of course the more quiet the consciousness can remain in a steady way, the more the condition is favourable for this to be.

19 July 1936

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The first thing one has to be careful not to do, is not to shut oneself in any way to the Mother. If one conceals what is happening in one from the Mother, something gets shut up. It is the mistake X has been making. Formerly she was quite open and unreserved and whenever there came a difficulty she got the full help. The Mother has told her to be perfectly open and hide nothing; if she does that, she will soon recover.

The Mother can not only know everything but do everything if she decides to do so—but if she did, where would be the sadhana? All would be only puppets moving in her hands. There are certain conditions which the sadhak must satisfy, and the Divine veils his power and knowledge so that the sadhak may have the occasion to love and will and think and act and grow into the true consciousness.

As for writing, the Mother has no time any longer, that is why she leaves it to me. X formerly used to tell the Mother to take full rest and not wear herself out etc.—how is it now she weeps because the Mother does not write? Her former attitude was the true one—she was in the psychic consciousness and always with the Mother's presence close to her.

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In meditation you must call on the Mother and concentrate on

the call in your heart till you feel an opening to her or some inner contact with her.

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I cannot meditate, for when I sit many thoughts come in.
Which path must I take, then, to advance and make it easier
for the Mother to work in me?

If you cannot meditate, pray. Offer all you do to the Mother and pray to her to take control of your actions and your nature. Love and worship. What is needed is to get a full opening in which you will become conscious of the Mother. These things will bring the opening. Only, even if it takes time, you must not get depression, despair or revolt—for these things get into the way of the opening.

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The whole thing is to keep yourself open to the Mother. The preparation of the nature for the decisive experiences always takes time and should be a continuous self-opening without discouragement or impatience for immediate results.

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Confidence in the Mother followed by a full opening to her is the best way.

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O Mother, how long will you remain far from me? Am I not your child?

The Mother is never far from you. If you keep open, you will always feel her with you.

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My sweet Mother, let me live in you.

Keep open to the Mother's peace and joy—by living in it you will come to live in her.

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Am I right in believing that Mother will do everything for me?

Yes, but it must be done with your inner assent and you must take the right attitude and openness to the Mother.

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Mother, how can one always receive Ananda from you?

By thinking less and less of oneself and more and more of the Divine.

Mother, how can I open myself to you?

By quieting the mind and vital, by concentrating more on the Mother and by calling for her Force to enter and work in the being.

Mother, why is one harmed when one enters into relation with someone?

It is because one receives mental and vital influences from others and some of these are harmful.

Lord, when will all my undesirable activities be abolished and only daivic activities remain? That is to say, when will I behave only as the Mother wants?

When the psychic being comes in the front.

Mother, how can one develop the buddhi?

The ordinary way is to read and study or to observe and try to understand all things; the sadhak's way is to open his mind to the light from above.

Loyalty and Fidelity

If an adverse Force comes, one has not to accept and welcome its suggestions, but to turn to the Mother and refuse to turn away

from her. Whether one can open or not, one has to be loyal and faithful. Loyalty and fidelity are not qualities for which one has to do Yoga; they are very simple things which any man or woman who aspires to the Truth ought to be able to accomplish.

21 April 1937

The Psychic and Opening

When I opened myself to the Mother in meditation, I saw her approaching me with an infant in her arms. As she came near, the golden Purusha frowned at her and she drew back behind you. I have seen this vision several times. What am I to do? You fill my whole being but, despite opening myself to the Mother, she is not allowed to approach me.

The infant in the Mother's arms is the symbol of the psychic being. The soul in direct touch with the divine Truth is hidden in man by the mind, the vital being and the physical nature (*manas, prāna, anna* of the Taittiriya Upanishad); one may practise Yoga and get illuminations in the mind and the reason, power and all kinds of experiences in the vital, even physical siddhis, but if the true soul-power behind and the psychic nature do not come into the front, nothing genuine has been done. In this Yoga, the psychic being is that which opens the rest of the nature to the true supramental light and finally to the supreme Ananda. If the soul is awakened, if there is a new birth out of the mere mental, vital and physical into the psychic consciousness, then the Yoga can be done; otherwise (by the mere power of the mind or any other part) it is impossible. It is this new birth, this awakening of the psychic consciousness, that the Mother is offering in the vision. If the golden Purusha refuses it, it must be because he is bound by some kind of attachment, probably to mere "knowledge". In that case, he is not very consistent; for it was he who demanded surrender to the Mother and now he rejects the very heart and meaning of the surrender. Probably this repeated experience is an indication of the principal difficulty in the sadhana. If there is refusal of the psychic new birth, a refusal to become the child new born from the Mother, owing to attachment to intellectual

knowledge or mental ideas or to some vital desire, then there will be a failure in the sadhana. Only if it is accepted, can his coming and doing sadhana here be fruitful. 26 November 1929

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Keep yourself open to the Mother's Force, but do not trust all forces. As you go on, if you keep straight, you will come to a time when the psychic becomes more predominantly active and the Light from above prevails more purely and strongly so that the chance of mental constructions and vital formations mixing with the true experience diminishes. As I have told you, these are not and cannot be the supramental Forces; it is a work of preparation which is only making things ready for a future Yoga-siddhi.

18 September 1932

*

What is the conscious way to bring the psychic to the front?
Does awakening of the psychic being mean its coming to the front?

No. Awakening is a different thing, it means the conscious action of the psychic from behind. When it comes to the front it invades the mind and vital and body and psychicises their movements. It comes best by aspiration and an unquestioning and entire turning and surrender to the Mother. But also it sometimes comes of itself when the Adhar is ready.

5 May 1933

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Is our inner being already open to the Mother or does it open in the course of the sadhana?

The inner being does not open except by sadhana or by some psychic touch on the life.

30 November 1933

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When I think of the Mother's compassion, I start weeping with gratefulness. Never before in my life have I felt so much

affection. If my mind is a bit quiet, will I be able to feel her help?

Yes, it is by quieting the mind that you will become able to call the Mother and open to her. The soothing effect was a touch from the psychic — one of the touches that prepare the opening of the psychic with its gift of inner peace, love and joy.

17 September 1934

*

Today again after pranam there were some vital dissatisfactions. But they have a great effect on the heart which has now begun to open to the Mother.

Get rid of these dissatisfactions, they prevent the permanent psychic opening.

29 September 1934

*

The heart is beginning to open to the Mother, but it is still easily touched by lower vital suggestions. That is probably why the vital is not always happy with the way the Mother deals with me at pranam.

What the psychic always feels is “What the Mother does is for the best”, and it accepts all with gladness. It is the vital part of the heart that is easily touched by the suggestions.

29 September 1934

*

I am not sure whether a direct psychic opening could have been done in my case without any difficulty.

The direct opening of the psychic centre is easy only when the ego-centricity is greatly diminished and also if there is a strong bhakti for the Mother. A spiritual humility and sense of submission and dependence is necessary.

16 July 1936

Sincerity

This child of the Mother is so unworthy. Only she knows when the child will be fit to have a place in her lap.

There is only one thing needed to make anyone fit for the Mother's grace — it is a perfect sincerity and a truthful openness to the Mother in all the being.

2 February 1934

*

I see many defects in my nature — for instance my tendency to get angry and to argue. I request the Mother to change all this, for it is in her hands to transform me.

It depends not only on the will of the Mother but on the sincerity of the sadhak. I do not see that you have any sincere will to do Yoga or to change.

13 July 1934

*

X once said to the Mother that if the sincerity was perfect there would be transformation in a day; to this the Mother replied "Yes". I do not understand how that could be possible — a long process of conversion of consciousness compressed into one day's work. Perhaps the Mother said yes to emphasise the importance of sincerity.

By sincerity Mother meant being open to no influence but the Divine's only. Now, if the whole being were sincere in that sense even to every cell of the body, what could prevent the most rapid transformation? People cannot be like that, however much the enlightened part of them may want to, because of the nature of the Ignorance out of which the ordinary Prakriti has been built — hence the necessity of a long and laborious working.

26 July 1934

*

Why do people often say that this Yoga is a very arduous one, full of difficulties and obstacles? One who is sincere and open exclusively to the Divine Mother would not believe this. It is

difficult only for those who refuse to take her as their all.
Of course; but most do not find it easy to take the Mother as
their all.

22 March 1935

*

We are told the Mother can act best if a sadhak is sincere. But
what is meant by this?

What is meant by sincere sadhana? In the Mother's definition
of sincere, it means "opening only to the Divine Forces", i.e.
rejecting all the others even if they come.

21 April 1936

The Mother's Grace

Do calm and equality come down from above by the Mother's
Grace?

When they descend, it is by the soul's aspiration and the Mother's
grace.

*

The Mother's grace is there always; open yourself to it in
quietude and confidence.

*

I don't feel Mother's grace as before. Sometimes I get the
suggestion that I am not fit for her service and for Yoga.

What is all this nonsense? The grace of the Mother does not
withdraw; open yourself and you will feel it.

1 May 1929

*

The presence whose fading he regrets can only be felt if the
inner being continues to be consecrated and the outer nature
is put into harmony or at least kept under the touch of the
inner spirit. But if he does things which his inner being does not
approve, this condition will be inevitably tarnished and, each
time, the possibility of his feeling the presence will diminish. He

must have a strong will to purification and an aspiration that does not flag and cease, if the Mother's grace is to be there and effective.

6 May 1930

*

To practise Yoga implies the will to overcome all attachments and turn to the Divine alone. The principal thing in the Yoga is to trust in the Divine Grace at every step, to direct the thought continually to the Divine and to offer oneself till the being opens and the Mother's force can be felt working in the Adhara.

26 July 1932

*

When a sadhak feels the Mother's Grace coming down in him, is it by the consent of the Purusha in him?

What do you mean "by the consent"? The Mother's Grace comes down by the Mother's will. The Purusha can accept or reject the Grace.

22 April 1933

*

Is there any law of the working of the Mother's Grace?

The more one develops the psychic, the more is it possible for the Grace to act.

13 August 1933

*

Is the Mother's Grace always general?

Both general and special.

8 February 1934

*

How to receive what the Mother gives generally?

You have only to keep yourself open and whatever you need and can receive at the moment will come.

10 February 1934

*

Some like me have exceptionally great imperfections and defects. We have no claim for any Yoga, much less for the Integral Yoga. Sheerly out of her care and grace, the Mother has managed to keep us here; but the only return we have given is to tire her out.

It is so — if the sadhaks had been different in their reaction to the Mother's grace, the work in the physical would have been much easier and less perilously subject to hostile attacks; perhaps it would have been done by now.

12 July 1936

Opening and Presence

Make yourself quiet and open — have complete confidence and you will feel the Mother's presence with you. 9 October 1933

*

It is by the constant remembrance that the being is prepared for the full opening. By the opening of the heart the Mother's presence begins to be felt and by the opening to her Power above the Force of the higher consciousness comes down into the body and works there to change the whole nature. 7 August 1934

*

The Mother says, "Keep yourself always open to me" and "I am always with you and around you." How am I to feel her presence always? Also, what does "conscious" mean and how does one become conscious?

The Divine Mother is everywhere and at all times she is with you. If one opens and becomes conscious, then one can feel her presence. It is because the nature is ignorant, full of itself and its desires that one cannot feel the presence. If one turns from self and desires and lives inwardly and outwardly for the Divine, then one begins to feel the divine Presence.

*

The condition you describe is a very good one and it is evident from it that you opened sincerely to the Mother when you met

her. Keep that sincere opening always and eventually a state of peace and joy and the sense of the Mother's presence will become permanent.

*

My dear Mother, peace in my vital, peace in my heart, peace everywhere.

Let the vital and the heart open always to the Mother's presence — the true source of peace.

The Mother's Presence

She Is Always Present

Why do I sometimes feel myself far from the Mother? I want to be able to feel her constantly with me.

The Mother is always there with you. You have only to throw away the forces of Ignorance to feel her with you always.

1 August 1933

*

You have said: "Always behave as if the Mother was looking at you; because she is, indeed, always present."¹ Does this mean that the Mother knows all our insignificant thoughts at all times, or only when she concentrates?

It is said that the Mother is always present and looking at you. That does not mean that in her physical mind she is thinking of you always and seeing your thoughts. There is no need of that, since she is everywhere and acts everywhere out of her universal knowledge.

It seems to me that the more we communicate our thoughts to her, the more we open ourselves to her forces and the more effective becomes our surrender to her. Am I right?

Yes, quite right.

12 August 1933

*

In what sense is the Mother "everywhere"? Is it because she has descended to the universal and has complete knowledge

¹ This message of Sri Aurobindo was first hung in the dining hall of the Ashram on 28 March 1928.—Ed.

of the forces working there? I suppose the universal or “everywhere” includes the physical plane. If so, does the Mother know all the happenings and events on the physical plane?

Including what Lloyd George had today for breakfast or what Roosevelt said to his wife about their servants? Why should the Mother “know” in the human way all such happenings on the physical plane? Her business in her embodiment is to know the working of the universal forces and use them for her work; for the rest she knows what she needs to know, sometimes with her inner self, sometimes with her physical mind. All knowledge is available in her universal self to her, but she brings forward only what is meant to be brought forward so that the work may be done.

13 August 1933

*

I had a dream in which I was walking alone in the desert. Was the meaning of the dream that this sadhana is very dry and difficult?

No. It is perhaps how some part of the vital or physical consciousness figured it. But the path is not a desert nor are you alone, since the Mother is with you.

2 November 1933

*

My vital does not seem to have devotion for the Mother. Instead of loving her, it gets mixed with undivine forces. Protect me from these vital obstructions. I wish to feel that I am lying in the Mother’s lap.

The Mother is always with you. The vital has its desires and therefore does not believe in the Mother’s presence. You have to call down the Mother’s Force into it to remove its doubts and desires.

11 November 1933

*

The Mother is always with you. Put your faith in her, remain quiet within and do with that quietude what has to be done. You will become more and more aware of her constant Presence, will

feel her action behind yours and the burden of your work will no longer be heavy on you.

21 April 1935

*

You have written: "Always behave as if the Mother was looking at you; because she is, indeed, always present." On the other hand, you wrote to me recently that it was not physically possible for her to be present everywhere. When I asked the Mother about this, she said that she could be present in many places. How to reconcile these contradictory statements?

If by physically you mean corporeally, in her visible tangible material body, it is obvious that it cannot be. When you asked Mother the question she did not understand you to mean that — she said she could be present everywhere, and she meant, of course, in her consciousness. It is the consciousness and not the body that is the being, the person; the body is only a support and instrument for the action of the consciousness. Mother can be personally present in her consciousness. The universal presence of course is always there and the universal and personal are two aspects of the same being.

25 August 1936

*

Sometimes the thought comes to me: "Outwardly and inwardly, I am very far from the Mother." Why does it come?

It is the feeling of the physical or outward being which is by its ignorance unable to feel the Mother's nearness.

How can I convince myself of the falsity of this thought and drive it away?

The Mother is always near and within, it is only the obscurity of mind and vital that do not see or feel it. That is a knowledge which the mind ought to hold firmly.

29 April 1937

Feeling the Mother's Presence

Live always as if you were under the very eye of the Supreme and of the Divine Mother. Do nothing, try to think and feel nothing that would be unworthy of the Divine Presence. 16 April 1930

*

The constant presence of the Mother comes by practice; the Divine Grace is essential for success in the sadhana, but it is the practice that prepares the descent of the Grace.

You have to learn to go inward, ceasing to live in external things only, quiet the mind and aspire to become aware of the Mother's workings in you. 2 July 1930

*

How and when can one feel the Mother's concrete presence all the time?

It is a matter, first, of the constant activity of the psychic and secondly of the conversion of the physical and its openness to inner supraphysical experience. Apart from the vital and its disturbances the physical is the chief difficulty in establishing a continuity of Yogic consciousness and experience. If the physical is thoroughly transformed — opened and conscious — then stability and continuity become easy. 16 October 1933

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It is quite necessary to realise the Mother in her formless presence and not only in her form. December 1933

*

But I do not see why you call the feeling sentimental or think that your sense of the presence of the Mother in the heart-beats etc. was unreal. It was your psychic being that suggested it to you and the response showed that the consciousness was ready. Mother felt that something was happening in you and felt that it was the beginning of a realisation — she was encouraging it and

did not discourage. If it had been a wrong or vital movement
she would not have felt like that.

13 August 1934

*

We believe that it is the Mother who does the sadhana in us,
but we scarcely feel it. I suppose there must be some veil in us.

It is a veil which disappears when the Mother's working as well
as her presence is consciously felt at all times.

7 January 1935

*

Is there any difference between the Mother's Presence and the
Divine Consciousness?

One can feel the Divine Consciousness impersonally as a new
consciousness only. The Mother's Presence is something more
— one feels herself there present within or above or enveloping
one or all these together.

8 July 1935

*

The feeling of the Mother's Presence or nearness does not depend
on whether you write or do not write. Many who write often
do not feel it, some who write seldom feel her always close.

11 June 1936

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You write: "One can feel the Divine Consciousness imper-
sonally as a new consciousness only"² but that the Mother's
presence is something more. You also wrote in another letter
that the Divine Presence in the heart is much more than the
consciousness. In what way is the Presence more than the
consciousness?

I meant that one can feel the divine consciousness as an imper-
sonal spiritual state, a state of peace, light, joy, wideness without
feeling in it the Divine Presence. The Divine Presence is felt as

² See letter of 8 July 1935 above.—Ed.

that of one who is the living source and essence of that light etc., a Being therefore, not merely a spiritual state. The Mother's Presence is still more concrete, definite, personal — it is not that of Someone unknown, of a Power or Being, but of one who is known, intimate, loved, to whom one can offer all the being in a living concrete way. The image is not indispensable, though it helps — the presence can be inwardly felt without it.

2 July 1936

*

There is no such necessary precedence as that first one must feel the Presence and then only can one feel oneself the Mother's; it is more often the increase of the feeling that brings the Presence. For the feeling comes from the psychic consciousness and it is the growth of the psychic consciousness that makes the constant Presence at last possible. The feeling comes from the psychic and is true of the inner being — its not being yet fulfilled in the whole does not make it an imagination; on the contrary, the more it grows the more is the likelihood of the whole being fulfilling this truth; the inner *bhāva* takes more and more possession of the outer consciousness and remoulds it so as to make it a truth there also. This is the constant principle of action in the Yogic transformation — what is true within comes out and takes possession of the mind and heart and will and through them prevails over the ignorance of the outer members and brings the inner truth out there also.

16 September 1936

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What stands in the way is the recurring circle of the old mixture. To break out of that is very necessary to arrive at an inner Yogic calm and peace not disturbed by these things. If that is established, it will be possible to feel in it the Mother's Presence, to open to her guidance, to get, not by occasional glimpses but in a steady opening and flowering, the psychic perception and the descent of the spiritual Light and Ananda. For that help will be with you.

7 March 1937

*

It is quite right and part of the right consciousness in sadhana that you should feel drawn in your heart towards the Mother and aspire for the vision and realisation of her presence. But there should not be any kind of restlessness joined to this feeling. The feeling should be quietly intense. It will then be easier for the sense of the presence to come and to grow in you.

*

I feel some movement coming down from above and as if it was broadening my head and face. The whole movement is towards the Mother. What can this be? Has it any direct relation with my artistic creations?

Yes. It is the result of the pressure put by the Mother to see and do things in the true light. What you feel coming down is the true consciousness with the presence and action of the Mother.

*

Mother gave me a quiet mind today. Ever since pranam I have been feeling her atmosphere; some force which I feel to be hers is upon my head and around me. My restlessness is much less, almost gone.

It is the Mother's touch that you feel upon you — and that indicates her presence. In the state of the consciousness it is the Force working on the system which brings what is needed or aspired to, peace or light or happiness and the psychic opening.

Peace, quiet, followed by a happy state and a psychic opening is what you need — let that grow always.

Spiritual Possibility due to the Mother's Presence

How much freedom is given to every sadhak here! But how many of us know what is meant by a Guru and how to respect him and treat him?

Certainly very few seem to realise what a possibility has been given them here — all has been turned into an opportunity for the bubbling of the vital or the tamas of the physical rather than

used for the intended psychic and spiritual purpose.

7 March 1936

*

You write, "Certainly very few seem to realise what a possibility has been given them here." What precisely do you mean by "possibility"—possibility of what?

I was not speaking of any particular thing—but the whole spiritual possibility due to the Mother's presence here. Very few realise what that means and even those who have some idea of it take little advantage and allow their lower nature to block the progress.

9 March 1936

The Mother's Presence and the Adverse Forces

X writes: "One thing I do not understand. Though I feel the Mother so near to me, these forces still dare to come and disturb me. How is this possible?" Please tell me what to reply to him.

The forces can always be there so long as there is not the transformation of the whole nature. They manifest themselves whenever they can. But if the Presence of the Mother can always be felt vividly and continuously, then one need not be troubled by their endeavours; one can face and repel them in the full consciousness of the Mother's grace and protection.

1936

The Mother's Presence and Human Imperfection

Do doubt and ego continue even after one has the realisation of the Divine Consciousness and the Mother's Presence?

No doubt can remain if there is the realisation of the Divine Consciousness and the Mother's Presence. Imperfections may remain in the outer being, but they do not trouble the inner being and can be got rid of quietly.

*

In your letters you say always that the Mother has withdrawn from you and you think she does it deliberately because of some fault or defect in your nature. This is an error. The Mother is always present with you; she does not withdraw. But if you believe otherwise, if you always expect her to withdraw, it will cloud your perception and prevent you from realising her presence. On the contrary, have the faith that, whether you feel it or not, her presence and her protection are always there. When old feelings or attachments rise from the subconscious, call her force and light in to clear all that is obscure, for they are there always ready to act. Do not admit any thoughts or ideas that lead to despondency or any kind of tamas.

6 May 1930

*

It is quite true that if the consciousness remains always centred in the Mother, then there would be no place for any kind of obscuration or disturbance; but that is not easy for the human mind and vital to get at once. One has to go on perseveringly till one has reached it.

The quickness with which the consciousness changes is a feature of the ordinary action of the physical consciousness when it is active and not inert. But many of the things you now feel (of which you speak in your letters), e.g. the idea of the Mother's presence and her regard on you, the reference in what you think and do to her with the idea of her approval or disapproval, are signs that the psychic is acting in your lower vital and physical mind and increasing its rule over their movements.

The forms that came before your eyes are sometimes glimpses of the things on other planes, sometimes symbols; e.g., the golden water, golden tree, rising moon. At certain stages of the inner opening such things come in great number before the inner vision. The feet of which you saw the golden footprints must have been the Mother's in one of her divine forms descending from the higher plane. The pricking and the heat are both of them signs of an action of the Force taking place within and so affecting the body.

The psychic relations I spoke of are those which men form

in life which help the power of the psychic to grow and prepare it for the time when it will be ready to come forward and govern the mind, vital and body instead of allowing the mind or the vital to lead the rest. There is a difference between the psychic and the self. The self is the Atman above which is one in all, remains always wide, free, pure, untouched by the action of life in its ignorance. Its nature is peace, freedom, light, wideness, Ananda. The psychic (*antarātmā*) is the individual being which comes down into life and travels from birth to birth and feels the experiences and grows by them till it is able to join itself with the pure Atman above.

9 April 1936

The Mother's Emanations

I saw the Mother in an experience. Is it an emanation of hers that I saw or is it her whole body and whole consciousness?

An emanation. How can her physical body be seen in a dream experience?

7 July 1933

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The Mother when she works in the supra-physical levels goes out in a different emanation to each sadhak.

11 December 1933

*

During the afternoon sleep I often come in contact with the Mother. Is it the Mother who sends her emanation?

Yes. Or rather something of her is always with you.

14 December 1933

The Mother's Knowledge and Her Emanations

In the case of X, I was under the impression that Mother could at once know of such things. Some even say that she knows everything — all that is material or spiritual.

Good Lord! you don't expect her mind to be a factual encyclopaedia of all that is happening on all the planes and in all the

universes? Or even on this earth — e.g. what Lloyd George had for dinner yesterday?

Others maintain that she knows when the question of consciousness is involved . . .

Questions of consciousness of course she always knows even with her outermost physical mind. Material facts she can know but is not bound to do it. The matter however is too complex for answer in a short space.

but as for material details, she does not know.

What would be true to say, is that she can know if she concentrates or if her attention is called to it and she decides to know. I often know from her what has happened before it is reported by anyone. But she does not care to do that on a general scale.

But if she does not know, what is the meaning of your message:
“Always behave as if the Mother was looking at you; because
she is, indeed, always present”?

It is the emanation of the Mother that is with each sadhak all the time. In former days when she was spending the night in a trance actively working in the Asram, she brought back with her the knowledge of all that was happening to everybody. Nowadays she has no time for that.

This question of Mother's knowledge became even more interesting for me today. She gave me the flower signifying “Discipline”. I began to wonder why this particular flower was given; then I remembered that yesterday I had not observed the right discipline by taking a little hot khichari with Y and Z.

In this respect the Mother is guided by her intuitions which tell her which flower is needed at the moment or helpful. Sometimes it is accompanied by a perception of a particular state of consciousness, sometimes by that of a material fact; but only

the bare fact, usually — e.g. it would not specify that it was hot khichari that was cooked or how Y or Z came in. Not that that is impossible, but it is unnecessary and does not happen unless needed.

Anyway, please tell me how far Mother and you know about our physical, material affairs.

In this case it was a general hint with no special reference to khichari.

16 July 1935

*

What you say about emanations is very interesting. The Mother then has about 150 emanations; adding 150 of yours, we find that we are each protected by one god and one goddess.

I am not aware of any emanations of mine. As for the Mother's, they are not there for protection, but to support the personal relation or contact with the sadhaka and to act so far as he will allow them to act.

16 July 1935

*

Kindly tell us a little more about emanations. How do they support the personal relation or contact the Mother has with us? I thought that all personal relations were with the Mother direct, not through a deputy!

It is terribly difficult to write of these things, for you are all as ignorant as blazes about these things and misunderstand at every step. The Emanation is not a deputy, but the Mother herself. She is not bound to her body, but can put herself out (emanate) in any way she likes. What emanates, suits itself to the nature of the personal relation she has with the sadhak which is different with each, but that does not prevent it from being herself. Its presence with the sadhak is not dependent on his consciousness of it. If everything were dependent on the surface consciousness of the sadhak, there would be no possibility of the divine action anywhere; the human worm would remain the human worm

and the human ass the human ass for ever and ever. For if the Divine could not be there behind the veil, how could either ever become conscious of anything but their wormhood and asshood even throughout the ages?

When X says that he feels the Mother's physical touch or approach, with whom does he have the contact — the Mother or the emanation?

With the Mother, the emanation helping — which is its business.

19 July 1935

The Mother's Awareness of Thoughts and Actions

The Mother can know our thoughts, but can she also know the exact words in the thoughts?

If the mind of the person is very clear, yes: otherwise it may be only the substance that comes or a part of the thought or some general idea.

19 May 1933

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In the case of X, the Mother fined the servant boy on such apparently insufficient grounds that it looks illogical. I cannot help thinking that she acted on a strong intuition which she felt and knew to be correct.

Mother acted on her inner perception about the whole affair; she does not act only on the outer facts but on what she feels or sees lying behind them.

29 August 1935

*

What you write about X is true. She does not realise that Mother knows all these things by other means and any information given to her only adds certain physical precisions to what she knows already.

How can she be open when she has such ideas against the Mother? They must necessarily shut her up to the Mother's influence.

Mother has written to her that Y had said nothing and that she knew things about X, independently of any information, from X's inner being itself which comes to her constantly and tells her or shows her what is in the nature.

The Mother besides sees things in vision and receives the thoughts of the sadhaks at Pranam and other times. Only the Mother never acts on these supraphysical intimations, unless there is a physical confirmation like the letter itself in this case. For nobody would understand her action — the sadhaks living in the physical mind would state her action unfounded and those affected would deny loudly — as many have done in the past — their secret thoughts, feelings and actions. I tell you all this in confidence so that you may understand what is the real cause of Mother's letters to X.

10 September 1936

*

Are our physical movements reflected in the Mother's mind and seen by her as images, or do they occur in her consciousness at the same time as we do them? But that would be very puzzling. The movements of two hundred people would appear before her eyes every minute or occur in her consciousness. Besides, it would be a very material kind of telepathy.

It would not be worthwhile. Mother can see what people are doing by images received by her in the subtle state which corresponds to sleep or concentration or by images or intimations received in the ordinary state; but much even of what comes to her automatically like that is unnecessary and to be always receiving everything would be intolerably troublesome as it would keep the consciousness occupied with a million trivialities; so that does not happen. What is more important is to know their inner condition and it is this chiefly which comes to her.

29 June 1937

Feeling the Mother's Presence and Seeing Visions

Is it true that when the Presence (image) is seen in the heart all the habits and movements of the lower nature will disappear

and there will be no more disturbances from it?

The image and the Presence are not the same. One can feel the Presence without seeing the image. But to produce the results you speak of, the Presence in the heart is not sufficient, there must be Presence in the whole consciousness and the Force of the Mother governing all the action of the nature.

*

You wrote yesterday in regard to X's visions: "Openness is not reckoned merely by visions." Quite so. But to have a fusion of the rays of the sun and moon on each side of the body, and to feel the descent and the Mother's presence in, behind and above oneself, is this not an exceptional vision and experience? Can it occur without sufficient opening to the Mother?

Why should it be exceptional to see the Sun and Moon on each side or to feel the Mother's presence everywhere around? There are plenty of sadhaks who have had these or equivalent experiences. What would be exceptional is to feel the Mother's presence like that always. But occasional experiences like these many have had.

15 September 1936

Feeling the Mother's Presence through a Photograph

When I sit in meditation before the Mother's photographs or the painting of her feet, I get more Force than when I sit at a distance—on my easy chair, for example. I have noticed that this happens invariably and I suppose it is not subjective merely. But I want to know the real truth from you.

No, it is not subjective merely. By your meditating near them, you have been able to enter through them into communion with the Mother and something of her presence and power is there.

14 July 1934

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Your experience about the photograph was a very fine and true experience. The Mother's presence can be felt through the photograph by one who regards it with devotion towards her. It was her true presence that was there, her subtle physical presence and all you felt was true. It shows that your physical mind is opening to the true consciousness. It is quite sure that this will grow and the remnants of the old movements are bound to disappear.

2 May 1936

Remembering the Mother and Feeling Her Presence

Today I felt that the only thing important is the Divine, nothing else. I tried to keep this experience all day long, but just before I sat down to write, I felt depression and confusion coming. But still I remembered my experience.

That is what should always be done. If, instead of yielding to the depression and confusion when they come, you immediately remembered and turned to the Mother, calling the Light and Force, remembering the Divine, rejecting everything else, then these lapses would diminish and light would come into the whole nature.

1 July 1930

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It is the outer nature that is obscure and when it is at ease, feels no necessity of remembering the Mother — when the difficulty comes, then it feels the necessity and remembers. But the inner being is not like that.

11 May 1933

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There must be something soiled in human love — otherwise why should I feel like this? After some problem with X in which he told me some unpleasant things, my vital got disturbed and my mind got confused. I kept remembering the incident over and over instead of remembering the Mother. I have come here for her — why then do my mind and vital want to make contact with human beings and acquire their narrow love and affection? Tell me now what I should do.

These are the usual weaknesses of the human nature when it makes relations with human beings—there are always these clashes and difficulties and turmoil in the vital. If you want to be free from them, do what we have already told you—look on all with a kindly feeling, as children of the Mother, but without any special relation and without any expectation from anybody. Yoga demands an equanimity of mind towards all things and persons.

17 November 1933

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What you have seen as the thing to do is quite correct. To remember the Mother always and to offer up to her all that comes is just the thing to do. There must come a condition in which you live within in the psychic consciousness with the feeling of the Mother's constant presence, while all the outer activities go on only on the surface and the Mother's Force acts on them to change them into more and more true psychic and spiritual action. The way you speak of is the best for bringing about that condition. Offer all to the Mother in complete confidence and do not be troubled or anxious about the difficulties that rise, but go on calmly and patiently till they pass.

28 March 1936

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I will be seeing the Mother tomorrow, but I would also like some message from you. Please tell me something which I can always turn to for help and contact during my stay in Bombay. I pray that I may feel the presence of the Mother and yourself throughout my days far away and come back safely to my home here at your feet.

Remember the Mother and, though physically far from her, try to feel her with you and act according to what your inner being tells you would be her will. Then you will be best able to feel her presence and mine and carry our atmosphere around you as a protection and a zone of quietude and light accompanying you everywhere.

12 December 1936

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It is quite possible for you to do sadhana at home and in the midst of your work—many do so. What is necessary at the beginning is to remember the Mother as much as possible, to concentrate on her in the heart for a time every day, if possible thinking of her as the Divine Mother, to aspire to feel her there within you, offer her your works and pray that from within she may guide and sustain you. This is a preliminary stage which often takes long, but if one goes through it with sincerity and steadfastness, the mentality begins little by little to change and a new consciousness opens in the sadhak which begins to be aware more and more of the Mother's presence within, of her working in the nature and in the life or of some other spiritual experience which opens the gate towards realisation.

22 February 1937

The Psychic and the Mother's Presence

The Mother's presence is always there; but if you decide to act on your own — your own idea, your own notion of things, your own will and demand upon things, then it is quite likely that her presence will get veiled; it is not she who withdraws from you, but you who draw back from her. But your mind and vital don't want to admit that, because it is always their preoccupation to justify their own movements. If the psychic were allowed its full predominance, this would not happen; it would have felt the veiling, but it would at once have said, "There must have been some mistake in me, a mist has arisen in me," and it would have looked and found the cause.

25 March 1932

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When I am alone I feel a sweet flow of love for the Mother and surrender to her welling out from my heart. But when I am in her physical presence I do not feel this love. Why does this happen?

It is when you live in the psychic that there is this feeling—but the psychic commands at present only a part of the mind and vital—it does not yet control the most external parts, that is

why you do not feel it when in the Mother's physical presence.

25 December 1933

*

If you feel the Mother's presence for the greater part of the day, it means that it is your psychic being that is active and feels like that — for without the activity of the psychic it would not be possible. Therefore your psychic being is there and not at all far off.

14 March 1935

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What you feel is not imagination. You have been going more and more into the psychic consciousness deep within you. When one is in the psychic, one begins to feel the presence of the Mother always with one and this becomes more and more frequent, constant, vivid and real as the psychic develops its power. This presence is felt in different ways by different sadhaks, but it is a true experience of the sadhana. It is what we mean when we say that the sadhak must come to feel always the presence of the Mother in his heart or within him. For in fact she is there always, only her presence is veiled by the ordinary movements of the mind, vital and physical, but when these become quiet and the psychic unveils itself, then one feels the presence of the Divine within.

29 February 1936

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He must go into himself and find the presence of the Divine Mother within and the psychic behind the heart and from there the knowledge will come and also the power to dissolve the inner obstacles.

21 December 1936

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It is good that you have come out of the bad condition. It is true that before the darshan or at that time attacks are apt to be violent — for the forces that oppose are very conscious and use their whole strength to spoil the darshan if they can. What has to be gained is the constant prominence of that part which is

always aware of the Mother — it is of course the psychic — for that though it can be covered over for the time being cannot be misled by the contrary suggestions. Once it is awake, it always reemerges from obscuration — that is the guarantee of the final arrival at the goal, but if it can be maintained in front or even consciously felt behind in all conditions, then the stages of the way also become comparatively safe and can be passed with greater ease and security.

6 February 1937

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In the evening meditation, there was an intense movement of surrender from the heart. I had the feeling of Mother's presence immediately in front of me and aspiration rose up from below. There was a willing and loving surrender from the heart, from the entire being, as if for fulfilment. I suppose the psychic being came to the front.

You had the psychic condition there and that means a coming of the influence of the psychic being to the front.

But why did I feel the Mother's presence in front of me and not within me?

It is when there is a complete psychic opening within that there is the presence within. The Presence in front means that it was with you, but had still to enter within.

13 July 1937

Feeling the Mother's Presence in Sleep

Is what X writes in his poem possible? He says:

“Even in sleep-depths I am wide awake
To thy sweet Presence that is always there.”

That does happen, but usually only when the psychic is in full activity.

27 September 1934

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It [*feeling the Mother's presence during sleep*] follows naturally

the presence in the waking state, but it takes a little time.

11 January 1935

Feeling the Mother's Presence at Work

It is for most people not easy to feel the Mother's presence with the work — they feel as if they are doing the work, the mind getting busy and not having the right passivity or quietude.

Union with the Mother

You write যতদিন না আমার psychic being জাগে.³ But your psychic being is already awakened, if it were not, you would not have these experiences. The inner being which you feel in union with the Mother is the psychic being. As you probably have not quite understood what I wrote to you, it might be better if you show Nolini my letter and ask him to explain to you the difference between the three layers (ত্রি) of the being about which I have spoken in the letter —

- (1) The inmost psychic being which is now awakened in you.
- (2) The external being which you feel doing work while the inner (psychic) is in union with the Mother.
- (3) The inner mental, vital and physical consciousness which connects the two, but of which you are not as yet conscious.

9 April 1931

*

Is it true that one should feel that it is the Divine Presence which moves one and does everything for one? Would it be possible to feel it without a union with the Divine Mother?

No — that is itself a union with her — to feel the Divine Presence above or in you and moving you.

14 July 1933

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³ "As long as my psychic being is not awakened." — Ed.

Nowadays I feel that even my blood flow is united with the Mother. When I breathe in, it is the Mother breathing in me and when I breathe out it is she who breathes out of me. Please tell me how my sadhana is proceeding.

It is going on all right. The more the union with the Mother increases, the better for the sadhana.

2 October 1933

*

I do not understand what some sadhaks mean by union with the Mother. Sometimes one feels a nearness, but that does not give one the same perception that the Mother has or her knowledge, purity, wideness. In what way can it be called a union?

I suppose they are trying to feel the Mother's presence, so if they get some sort of feeling of nearness, they call it union. But of course that is only a step towards union. Union is much more than that.

5 March 1934

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While sitting in the meditation hall, I felt a sort of oneness with the Mother's consciousness. But these days it is not possible to go deep in meditation at all. Perhaps it is not even necessary if there is receptivity in the waking state.

What is most important is the change of consciousness of which this feeling of oneness is a part. The going deep in meditation is only a means and it is not always necessary if the great experiences come easily without it.

8 April 1934

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Yes, that is the true basis. In the perfect equality wholly united with the Mother — so the higher consciousness can be lived and brought even into the outermost parts of the nature.

22 May 1934

*

I wrote a prayer to the Mother. Her answer to it was: "Open

your heart and you will find me already there." What exactly did she mean by "already there"?

What Mother meant was this that when there is a certain opening of the heart, you find that there was always the eternal union there (the same that you experience always in the Self above).

2 July 1935

*

I saw in a vision a basket full of the flower "Gratitude". What does it symbolise?

It is the gratitude to the Divine that it indicates — which will come as the soul opens to the Light and Truth and gets the experience and the joy of union with the Mother.

The Mother's Force

What Is the Mother's Force?

What is the Yoga shakti? What is Yogic mind-force, Yogic life-force and Yogic body-force?

In the Yogic consciousness one is not only aware of things, but of forces, not only of forces, but of the conscious being behind the forces. One is aware of all this not only in oneself but in the universe. There is a force which accompanies the growth of this new consciousness and at once grows with it and helps it to come about and to perfect itself. This force is the Yoga shakti. It is here asleep and coiled up in all the centres of our inner being (chakras) and is at the base what is called in the Tantras the Kundalini Shakti. But it is also above us, above our head as the Divine Force — not there coiled up, involved, asleep, but awake, scient, potent, extended and wide; it is there waiting for manifestation and to this Force we have to open ourselves — to the power of the Mother. In the mind it manifests itself as a divine mind-force or a universal mind-force and it can do everything that the personal mind cannot do; it is then the Yogic mind-force. When it manifests and works in the vital or physical in the same way, it is then apparent as a Yogic life-force or a Yogic body-force. It can awake in all these forms, bursting outwards and upwards, extending itself into wideness from below; or it can descend and become there a definite power for things; it can pour downwards into the body, working, establishing its reign, extending into wideness from above, link the lowest in us with the highest above us, release the individual into a cosmic universality or into absoluteness and transcendence.

23 March 1933

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You often speak of the Mother's Force. What is it?

It is the Divine Force which works to remove the ignorance and change the nature into the divine nature. 18 June 1933

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Why do I feel that it is I who do this thing or that? For is it not true that it is the Mother's force which does everything in us?

When I speak of the Mother's force, I do not speak of the force of Prakriti which carries on things in the Ignorance but of the higher Force of the Divine that descends from above to transform the nature. 4 August 1933

Progress in Sadhana and the Mother's Force

When you say to someone, "You are open to the Mother", do you mean open in a general way? Are not all in the Asram more or less open to the Mother as soon as they have accepted her as the Mother? And when the Mother has accepted a sadhak, does her Force not begin to work in him and is it not always with him?

All are not open to the Force. X never was in the least degree and there are others who shut themselves up in their own self-will or their own formations, ideas or desires. If there is no opening, the Force may act for a long time without response—and if there is an insufficient opening then the progress will be slow and chequered by great difficulties.

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Let nothing and nobody come between you and the Mother's force. It is on your admitting and keeping that force and responding to the true inspiration and not on any ideas the mind may form that success will depend. Even ideas or plans which might otherwise be useful, will fail if there is not behind them the true spirit and the true force and influence. 23 March 1928

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The illnesses you have are the signs of the resistance of your physical consciousness to the action of the Divine Power.

If you cannot advance in your sadhana, it is because you are divided and do not give yourself without reserve. You speak of surrendering everything to the Mother but you have not done even the one thing which she asked of you and which you have promised more than once. If after having called the action of the Divine Force, you allow other influences to prevail, how can you expect to be free from obstruction and difficulties?

20 November 1928

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Nowadays my vital nature gets excited about anything and everything, even trifles. From morning to night it is in an unhappy condition. I have my doubts whether it can be changed. I know that it is not in my power to do the work; the Mother's Grace alone can do it. My outer mind needs some rays of hope.

It is to be assumed that you are capable of the change since you are here in the presence and under the protection of the Mother. The pressure and help of the Mother's Force is always there. Your rapidity of progress depends upon your keeping yourself open to it and rejecting calmly, quietly and steadily all suggestions and invasions of other forces. Especially the nervous excitement of the vital has to be rejected; a calm and quiet strength in the nervous being and the body is the only sound basis. It is there for you to receive, if you open yourself to it always.

27 August 1932

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When I look at the way the Mother deals with people, I feel that she does not love them equally in an outward way. Is this feeling true?

The Mother's Force is working in all alike, according to their capacity they will receive it and it will work in them; if there is any difference, it is their own nature that makes it.

6 February 1933

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This restless mind and unquiet vital are not peculiar to you; they are the human nature from which every sadhak starts. What you have to get is the Mother's force and grace bringing with it deliverance, peace and Ananda which you say you from time to time experience. That in the beginning does come only for a short time, but as you persist in the path, it increases in frequency and stays longer until it can be made a permanent experience. It is this that will cure the defects of which you complain.

16 June 1933

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Once you wrote, "Before you read offer it to the Mother and call down her force." Is her force not already in us and working?

If it is, then you will have no difficulty.

4 August 1933

*

Is not every sadhak ready to receive and contain the Mother's force at any time and in any circumstance? Who would not want to hold its constant action?

It is not a question of mental wish but of capacity and whether all the parts of the being are ready and can retain it. If everybody were containing the constant action of the Mother's force, the sadhana would be finished by now and the siddhi complete.

7 August 1933

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Is it not time for me to let the Mother's Force take charge of the Yoga, instead of allowing the Adhar to think it is doing the Yoga?

That can be only when all is ready.

In that case is it necessary for the mind to aspire? Because once the Force is there, it will set everything right.

The system has first to be accustomed to the Force working.

9 May 1934

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All has to be done by the working of the Mother's force aided by your aspiration, devotion and surrender. 30 October 1934

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The Mother has already given you orally the answer to your letter and the directions you asked for. As she told you, your concentration should be in the heart centre and all the rest—the rising above the head etc.—should come of itself in the natural process of the sadhana. Through the heart you will get the closer and closer touch of the Mother and the working of her Force in the whole being. 9 December 1934

*

In a dream yesterday I was walking in the street, carrying some kind of big flat drum. Just for fun I touched it with my fingers and very sweet musical sounds were produced. Perhaps it was a broken drum, for no one expected any music to come from it, but as I went on playing, fine music was coming out.

It is a symbol of the harmony that can be brought out of the human nature in spite of its present imperfection when one gives it the true touch, that is, puts it under the true psychic influence.

People around me were charmed by the music. I was very happy and played more and more; many new fine tunes were coming from the drum as if they were simply ready made.

Always keep open to the Mother's Force—let the inner consciousness develop—only that will help and deliver from all difficulties as the openness in the physical grows in you.

12 January 1935

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There are some people here who remain constantly in despair and gloom because they have become conscious of their minutest imperfections, but they are unable to get rid of them.

They are unable for two reasons: (1) because they yield to despair and gloom and the illusion of impotence, (2) because they try only with their own strength and do not care or know how to call in the working of the Mother's force.

10 June 1936

*

Sometimes I feel a thick wall between me and the Divine. At other times there is a pressure on me and I feel quietude come into me.

Persevere in spite of the fluctuations. The Mother's force is at work *all the time*, even when the thick wall is there, so that there may be no wall in future.

24 June 1936

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You have written that "the Force is there". Why then do I not feel it except for a short time after pranam? Formerly I felt that the Force above was doing the sadhana. Why do I not feel it now?

The Mother's Force is not only above on the summit of the being. It is there with you and near you, ready to act whenever your nature will allow it. It is so with everybody here.

15 November 1936

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This evening X told me, "Fill your entire nature with the Mother's power." In my past sadhana I have never consciously invoked power; the entire stress has been on purity and clarity. But if that is the need of my nature, I will pray for power along with other things.

It is not necessary to ask for Power. It is the Mother's Force that must work in the being and if it is there, all necessary power will come.

c. 1936

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When a sadhak works with the right attitude and the higher Force acts in him directly, how does the Force work to purify or remove his defects and imperfections?

It acts by awakening the inner consciousness gradually or swiftly, by replacing the principle of ego-service by the principle of service of the Divine, by making him watch his actions and see his own defects and pushing him to rectify them, by establishing a connection between his consciousness and the Mother's consciousness, by preparing his nature to be taken up more and more by the Mother's consciousness and force, by giving him experiences which make him ready for the major experiences of Yoga, by stimulating the growth of his psychic being, by opening him to the Mother as the Universal Being, etc. etc. Naturally it acts differently in different persons.

7 May 1937

Reliance on the Mother's Force

My mind is not yet quiet and that is why I am not getting any joy in my sadhana, any experience or realisation — nothing at all. This makes me very sad and unhappy. May the Mother bestow on me the flow of Peace and help me to open my closed heart-centre.

There has always been too much reliance on the action of your own mind and will — that is why you cannot progress. If you could once get the habit of silent reliance on the power of the Mother — not merely calling it in to support your own effort — the obstacle would diminish and eventually disappear.

14 July 1929

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You should not rely on anything else alone, however helpful it may seem, but chiefly, primarily, fundamentally on the Mother's Force. The Sun and the Light may be a help, and will be if it is the true light and the true Sun, but cannot take the place of the Mother's Force.

28 May 1930

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There is no aspiration in me, no capacity to follow something higher. I feel dullness inside. But I do feel quiet from the pressure on my head. I must be patient and keep faith — then you will make me conscious.

Quietude first; with it confidence in the Mother's Force that is working on you. When the physical mind is obliged to be quiet, it has this impression of inactivity and dullness at first. When it opens more and more to the Force, that impression will disappear.

12 November 1932

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If one gives full and constant consent to the Mother's working, how can the attempt of other beings to enter into one succeed?

If you give consent to the Mother's working alone, then it cannot.

It is not always an attempt. One receives the thoughts and feelings of the others without any attempt or intention of theirs, because they are in the atmosphere.

31 July 1933

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The depression has come upon you because you accepted the thought that you were not doing what you should and not using the chance Mother had given you. Such thoughts should never be indulged for they open the door to depression and depression opens the door to the old movements; they used to come formerly from the idea that you were unfit, now it is this idea that you are not doing all you ought to do. As a matter of fact you have been progressing with a surprising rapidity for the last days at a rate that we ourselves did not expect from you. But whether the progress is rapid or slow, the attitude should always be an entire faith and reliance on the Mother; just as you do not think that the progress was the result of your own effort or merit, but of your taking the right attitude of reliance and the Mother's force working, so you should not think that any slowness or difficulty was due to your own demerit but only

seek to keep this attitude of reliance and let the Mother's Force work,—slowly or rapidly does not matter.

The dream was again one of these experiences of test or ordeal on the vital plane which you have been having—here it was the test of temptation by power, comfort, riches, attractive things, as it was formerly the test by fear, difficulty, trouble. The evidence of all these tests is that your inner being is perfectly ready and free to go unwaveringly to the goal. There is nothing there that is wrong or defective.

Keep the reliance steady in your heart and do not allow self-distrust, depression or sadness to invade you from outside.

14 November 1935

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How can I do Yoga when I know nothing about your Yoga? I do not even know what to do.

There are two ways of doing Yoga, one by knowledge and one's own efforts, the other by reliance on the Mother. In the last way one has to offer one's mind and heart and all to the Mother for her Force to work on it, call her in all difficulties, have faith and bhakti. At first it takes time, often a long time, for the consciousness to be prepared in this way and during that time many difficulties can come up, but if one perseveres a time comes when all is ready, the Mother's Force opens the consciousness fully to the Divine, then all that must develop develops within, spiritual experience comes and with it the knowledge and union with the Divine.

9 April 1937

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You say after several years you have not changed your nature. I only wish the external nature were so easy to transform that it could be done in a few years. You forget also that the real problem—to get rid of the pervading ego in this nature—is a task you have seriously tackled only a short time ago. And it is not in a few months that that can be done. Even the best sadhaks find after many experiences and large changes on the

higher planes that here much remains to be done. How do you expect to get rid of it at once unlike everybody else? A Yoga like this needs patience, because it means a change both of the radical motives and of each part and detail of the nature. It will not do to say, "Yesterday I determined this time to give myself entirely to the Mother, and look it is not done, on the contrary all the old opposite things turn up once more; so there is nothing to do but to proclaim myself unfit and give up the Yoga." Of course when you come to the point where you make a resolution of that kind, immediately all that stands in the way does rise up—it invariably happens. The thing to be done is to stand back, observe and reject, not to allow these things to get hold of you, to keep your central will separate from them and call in the Mother's Force to meet them. If one does get involved as often happens, then to get disinvolved as soon as possible and go forward again. That is what everybody, every Yogi does—to be depressed because one cannot do everything in a rush is quite contrary to the truth of the matter. A stumble does not mean that one is unfit, nor does prolonged difficulty mean that for oneself the thing is impossible.

The fact that you have to give up your ordinary work when you get depressed does not mean that you have not gained in steadiness—it only means that the steadiness you have gained is not a personal virtue but depends on your keeping the contact with the Mother—for it is her force that is behind it and behind all the progress you can make. Learn to rely on that Force more, to open to it more completely and to seek spiritual progress even not for your own sake but for the sake of the Divine—then you will go on more smoothly. Get the psychic opening in the most external physical consciousness. That and not despondency is the lesson you ought to draw from your present adverse experience.

Becoming Conscious of the Mother's Force

Yesterday I felt a great Peace and Power. I felt the Mother's atmosphere around me and a strange nearness to her. I thought

that the Mother's thought or consciousness must be with me.
Is this true?

The Force is always around you, for the Mother has put her consciousness there—but it works with especial force when we think of you, and that is what you feel. Your consciousness of it—what you describe of your feeling about it, is quite correct—to become clearly conscious in all parts of the being takes time.

6 July 1933

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X told me that he does not feel it is the Mother's force that works in him, since with his own force he is able to lift 40 lbs. of grain.

What is meant by one's own force? All force is cosmic and the individual is merely an instrument—a certain amount of the force may be stored in him, but that does not make it his own.

There are certain possibilities in the way of the experience. First there is the faith, or sometimes a mental realisation and this of itself is enough to make one open to the Mother's force so that it is always available at need or call. Even if one does not feel the Force coming, yet the results are there and visible. The next is when one feels oneself like an instrument and is aware of the Energy using it. A third is the contact with the Power above and its descent (spontaneous or at call) into the body—this is the more concrete way of having it, for one physically feels the Force working in one. Finally there is a state of awareness of close contact with the Mother (inward) which brings a similar result.

12 May 1934

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What I have to see is that my consciousness supports the working of the Mother's Force in me. For example, if my being constantly supported the Mother's work, there would hardly be any halt in sadhana due to the tamas in me; the tamasic inertia would get transformed into peace without rising up and darkening the other parts of the being.

Yes, that is how it should happen—but it is difficult so long as the inner being is not conscious and receptive at all times and in all conditions—and it is difficult and takes time to establish such a condition.

23 January 1935

Descent of the Mother's Force

What you feel streaming down must be the Mother's overhead Force. It flows usually from above the head and works at first in the mind centres (head and neck) and afterwards goes down into the chest and heart and then through the movement of the whole body.

It is the effect of this working which you must be feeling in the head up to the shoulders. The Force that comes down from above is the one that works to transform the consciousness into that of a higher spiritual being. Before that the Mother's Force works in the psychic, mental, vital and the physical plane itself to support, purify and psychically change the consciousness.

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When you began to meditate, you saw the Mother's face; that is very good, it means that there is an inner connection established. The absence of the smile does not mean that she is displeased or that you have done anything against her will. At the same time the Mother's force descended on you, it was the pressure of her Force that you felt on the head and breast—everybody feels in the beginning this pressure—and what you felt in the breast was the working of the Force. In the Yoga these are signs of the action of the Yoga and you must observe quietly what happens without getting disturbed, remembering the Mother always and trusting in her action upon you.

25 June 1932

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When there is obscurity or habitual thoughts, the narrowness of the physical mind becomes prominent. But now and then, the physical mind seems to become limitless, thoughtless and without obscurity. Is this a true feeling?

Yes. All the parts that have to be changed must widen like that before the higher consciousness can descend into them.

Is there any relation between the Mother's descent into the physical parts and the descent of the forces that are working in me?

Certainly. In a sense, the descent of the higher forces is the Mother's own descent — for it is she who comes down in them.

21 December 1933

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As I sat to pray, I felt an electric force pass through my spinal cord. It was like the electricity from a battery passing from the crown of my head down to the end of my backbone. The more it went downward, the more strong and joyous was the rapture I felt. What is this?

It is the descent of the Mother's Force from above through the spinal cord — it is a well-known movement. There are two or three kinds of descent. One is this touching the base of the centres which rest on the spinal cord. Another is through the head into the body going from level to level till the whole body is filled and opening all the centres of consciousness. Another is a descent enveloping the Adhar from outside.

1 February 1934

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Last night I felt that the Mother's Force, instead of descending through the head as usual, came down directly through the forehead centre.

It can come in anywhere, but the normal way of descent is through the head.

8 May 1934

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When the Peace is established, this higher or Divine Force from above can descend and work in us. It descends usually first into the head and liberates the inner mind centres, then into the heart centre and liberates fully the psychic and emotional

being, then into the navel and other vital centres and liberates the inner vital, then into the Muladhara and below and liberates the inner physical being. It works at the same time for perfection as well as liberation; it takes up the whole nature part by part and deals with it, rejecting what has to be rejected, sublimating what has to be sublimated, creating what has to be created. It integrates, harmonises, establishes a new rhythm in the nature. It can bring down too a higher and yet higher force and range of the higher Nature until, if that be the aim of the sadhana, it becomes possible to bring down the supramental force and existence. All this is prepared, assisted, farthered by the work of the psychic being in the heart centre; the more it is open, in front, active, the quicker, safer, easier the working of the Force can be. The more love and bhakti and surrender grow in the heart, the more rapid and perfect becomes the evolution of the sadhana. For the descent and transformation imply at the same time an increasing contact and union with the Divine.

That is the fundamental rationale of the Sadhana. It will be evident that the two most important things here are the opening of the heart centre and the opening of the mind centres to all that is behind and above them. For the heart opens to the psychic being and the mind centres open to the higher consciousness and the nexus between the psychic being and the higher consciousness is the principal means of the Siddhi. The first opening is effected by a concentration in the heart, a call to the Divine to manifest within us and through the psychic to take up and lead the whole nature. Aspiration, prayer, bhakti, love, surrender are the main supports of this part of the Sadhana — accompanied by a rejection of all that stands in the way of what we aspire for. The second opening is effected by a concentration of the consciousness in the head (afterwards, above it) and an aspiration and call and a sustained will for the descent of the divine Peace, Power, Light, Knowledge, Ananda into the being — the Peace first or the Peace and Force together. Some indeed receive Light first or Ananda first or some sudden pouring down of Knowledge. With some there is first an opening which reveals to them a vast infinite Silence, Force, Light or Bliss above them

and afterwards either they ascend to that or these things begin to descend into the lower nature. With others there is either the descent, first into the head, then down to the heart level, then to the navel and below and through the whole body, or else an inexplicable opening — without any sense of descent — of peace, light, wideness or power or else a horizontal opening into the cosmic consciousness or, in a suddenly widened mind, an outburst of knowledge. Whatever comes has to be welcomed — for there is no absolute rule for all, — but if the peace has not come first, care must be taken not to swell oneself in exultation or lose the balance. The capital movement however is when the Divine Force or Shakti, the Power of the Mother comes down and takes hold, for then the organisation of the consciousness begins and the larger foundation of the Yoga.

11 September 1934

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The experiences you have are a good starting-point for realisation. They have to develop into the light of a deeper state in which there will be the descent of a higher consciousness into you. Your present consciousness in which you feel these things is only a preparatory one — in which the Mother works in you through the cosmic power according to your state of consciousness and your karma and in that working both success and failure can come — one has to remain equal-minded to both while trying always for success. A surer guidance can come even in this preparatory consciousness if you are entirely turned towards her alone in such a way that you can feel her direct guidance and follow it without any other influence or force intervening to act upon you, but that condition is not easy to get or keep — it needs a great one-pointedness and constant single-minded dedication. When the higher consciousness will descend, then a closer union, a more intimate consciousness of the Presence and a more illumined intuition will become possible.

17 November 1934

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The stream which you feel coming down on the head and pouring into you is indeed a current of the Mother's Force; it is so that it is often felt; it flows into the body in currents and works there to liberate and change the consciousness. As the consciousness changes and develops, you will begin yourself to understand the meaning and working of these things.

21 August 1936

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Something is growing in you, but it is all inside — still if there is the steady persistence it is bound to come out. For instance, this white dazzling light with currents, it is a sure sign of the Force (the Mother's) entering and working in the *ādhāra*, but it came to you in sleep — that is to say, in the inner being, still behind the veil. The moment it came out, the dryness would disappear.

5 February 1937

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What the Mother did was to light the fire within — if you did not feel it, it must be because the outer covering has not yet allowed it to come through into the outer consciousness. But something in the inner being must have kept it and opened more widely — that is shown by your experience in sleep, for that was evidently an action of the Mother in the inner being. The descent of this current in the spine is always a descent of the Mother's Force working in the centres to open them; the strong force of the current which you felt is an evident proof that the wider opening is there. You have only to persist and the effects both of the fire and the force will come out in the surface consciousness — for always there is a preparatory work behind the veil in the inner being before the veil thins or disappears and all the working can be done with the participation of the outer consciousness.

22 April 1937

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The Mother's force can come down quite nicely and gently — there is no need of palpitations, giddiness or nausea for that.

Pressure of the Descending Force

This is the meaning of your experiences:

(1) The power of the Divine Mother from above is descending upon you and the pressure you feel on your head and the workings of which you are aware are hers.

Put yourself completely into her hands, have entire confidence, observe carefully and accurately all that happens and write that here. There is no need of special instructions since what is needed is being done for you.

(2) The first pressure was on your mind. The centres of the mind are (a) the head and above it, (b) the centre of the forehead between the eyes, (c) the throat and the vital mental (emotional) and sensational mind centres from the breast downward. It is this latter which is the first *prāṇa* of which you became aware. The action of the Power was to widen these two parts of you and raise them up towards the lowest centre of the higher consciousness above your head, so that hereafter they might both be consciously governed from there and that these might both move in a wide universal consciousness not limited by the body.

(3) The other *prāṇa*, the restless one of which you became aware, is the vital being, the being of desire and life-movement. The work of the Power has been directed towards quieting the restless movements and making it wide in consciousness as with the Mind. The large body you felt was the vital body, not the physical, *sthūla śarīra*.

(4) The basis of your Sadhana must be silence and quiet, *sānti, nīravatā*.

You must remain and grow always more and more deeply quiet and still both in yourself and in your attitude to the world around you. If you can do this, the sadhana is likely to go on progressing and enlarging itself with a minimum of trouble and disturbance.

Never mind your family difficulties and say nothing to your people. Go on quietly trusting to the Power that is at work in you.

8 September 1927

It is the pressure of Mother's force. If you keep quiet and don't resist, then instead of being uneasy, it will make you happy.

11 August 1932

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From time to time there is a feeling of pressure and heaviness in different parts of the body as the pressure comes down. When it passes, the mind is at peace, the heart free, the body light and easy.

The pressure is that of the Mother's force. When there is a resistance, you feel the pressure. When the resistance is cleared away, there is the lightness and ease.

4 October 1932

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Nowadays in the evening I try to remain calm and pray for half an hour. Then I feel a weight or pressure on my head. It is so calm and cool, yet has such force and fire. Then I am disturbed by nothing whatever. Formerly I also felt this on certain days, but then I lost it due to some disorder of the consciousness.

This weight or pressure on the head is always the sign that the Mother's Force is in contact with you and pressing from above to envelop your being and enter the Adhar and pervade it — usually passing by degrees through the centres on its way downward. Sometimes it comes first as Peace, sometimes as Force, sometimes as the Mother's consciousness and her presence, sometimes as Ananda.

When you lost it before, it must have been due either to some uprising of vital imperfections in yourself or an attack from outside. Of course the pressure need not always be there, but if things take the ordinary course, it usually recurs or else continues until the Adhar is open and there is no further obstacle to the descent of the higher consciousness.

18 September 1933

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From time to time, I feel a pressure above my head and also in my head and forehead. For the last few days, when I sit for

meditation, there is a feeling as though ants were crawling at the top of my neck and in the spinal cord. Does this have any value?

You can write to him¹ that the pressure he feels on his head is the pressure of the Mother's force (the force of the higher consciousness) preparing an opening through the three upper centres (brahma-randhra, base of sahasradala; inner mind centre in the forehead; and the heart or psychic-emotional centre). The feeling in the spine is due to a very slight flow of the current of the Shakti from above—the spine being the base of all the centres and the channel through which the Force tends most easily to flow from one centre to another (Sahasradala = the centre where the human or mental and the higher or spiritual consciousness meet).

15 September 1935

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If the term “pressure” is a wrong one to describe the Mother's recent dealings with me,² what is the sense in which it is used in *The Mother*—she “puts on them the required pressure” [p. 18] and “the vehemence of her pressure”? [p. 20]

I was speaking of your case only—it was not my intention to say that the Mother never uses pressure. But pressure also can be of various kinds. There is the pressure of the Force when it is entering the mind or vital or body—a pressure to go faster, a pressure to build or form, a pressure to break and many more. In your case if there is any pressure it is that of help or support or removal of an attack, but it does not seem to me that that can properly be called pressure.

In the same book you say “her hands are outstretched to strike and to succour”. [p. 19] What do you mean by “strike” here?

It expresses her general action in the world. She strikes at the Asuras, she strikes also at everything that has to be got rid of

¹ Written by Sri Aurobindo to his secretary, who replied to the enquirer.—Ed.

² See letter of 5 June 1936 on pages 118–19.—Ed.

or destroyed, at the obstacles to the sadhana etc. I may say that the Mother never uses the Mahakali power in your case nor the Mahakali pressure.

5 June 1936

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The suggestion that the pressure of sadhana is unbearable has got fixed in my mind, particularly after reading in two places that those whose nerves are weak are better off living outside the Ashram. One place is in one of your letters, and another in the *Conversations*, where the Mother says: "You must have a strong body and strong nerves. . . . If you have to bear the pressure of the Divine Descent, you must be very strong and powerful, otherwise you would be shaken to pieces."³ Are these things applicable to me?

These things refer to beginners who are not open and have not a fit Adhar, yet want to do the sadhana.

Your body is not weak and you have considerable vital strength. Moreover you have the openness to the Force and the habit of receiving it, and there is no reason why there should be any upsetting by the Force. It is not the Force, but the suggestion of these vital Forces that produces the upsetting.

7 September 1936

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The feeling of the vibration of the Mother's force around the head is more than a mental idea or even a mental realisation, it is an experience. This vibration is indeed the action of the Mother's Force which is first felt above the head or around it, then afterwards within the head. The pressure means that it is working to open the mind and its centres so that it may enter. The mind-centres are in the head, one at the top and above it, another between the eyes, a third in the throat. That is why you feel the vibration around the head and sometimes up to the neck, but not below. It is so usually, for it is only after enveloping and entering the mind that it goes below to the emotional and

³ *The Mother, Conversations 1929–1931 (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 2003)*, p. 11.

vital parts (heart, navel, etc.) — though sometimes it is more enveloping before it enters the body.

24 March 1937

Faith and the Working of the Mother's Force

Is it so difficult to have faith and confidence in the Mother? Even with a little of that attitude, the descent was taking place in you.

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If you want to get back your faith and keep it, you must first quiet your mind and make it open and obedient to the Mother's force. If you have an excited mind at the mercy of every influence and impulse, you will remain a field of conflicting and contrary forces and cannot progress. You will begin to listen to your own ignorance instead of the Mother's knowledge and your faith will naturally disappear and you will get into a wrong condition and a wrong attitude.

March 1928

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Put your faith in the Divine Shakti, set your mind at rest and let the Mother's Force work.

26 August 1933

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There is no reason to be discouraged. Three years is not too much for the preparation of the nature and it is usually through fluctuations that it gradually grows nearer to the point where a continuous progress becomes possible. One has to cleave firmly to the faith in the Mother's working behind all appearances and you will find that that will carry you through.

31 August 1935

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I can try to call down the Mother's Force, but faith and surrender would require a wonderful Yogic poise and power possible only in born Yogis, I think.

Not at all. A wonderful Yogic poise and power would usually bring self-reliance rather than faith and surrender. It is the simple people who do the latter most easily.

10 August 1936

Surrender to the Mother and the Working of Her Force

Is it the Purusha who consents to the Mother's Force acting in the whole being?

Yes.

If the Purusha does not consent to the working of the Mother's Force, does it mean that the other beings (mental, vital, physical and psychic) also cannot come to the front to enable the sadhak to receive the Mother's Grace?

No. The Purusha often holds back and lets the other beings consent or reject in his place.

22 April 1933

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Make the central surrender. The Mother's Force will do the rest.

25 October 1933

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In this process of the descent from above and the working it is most important not to rely entirely on oneself, but to rely on the guidance of the Guru and to refer all that happens to his judgment and arbitration and decision. For it often happens that the forces of the lower nature are stimulated and excited by the descent and want to mix with it and turn it to their profit. It often happens too that some Power or Powers undivine in their nature present themselves as the Supreme Lord or as the Divine Mother and claim the being's service and surrender. If these things are accepted, there will be an extremely disastrous consequence. If indeed there is the assent of the sadhak to the Divine working alone and the submission or surrender to that guidance, then all can go smoothly. This assent and a rejection of all egoistic forces or forces that appeal to the ego are the safeguard throughout the sadhana. But the ways of Nature are full of snares, the disguises of the ego are innumerable, the illusions of the Powers of Darkness, Rakshasi Maya, are extraordinarily skilful; the reason is an insufficient guide and often turns traitor; vital desire is always

with us tempting to follow any alluring call. This is the reason why in this Yoga we insist so much on what we call *samarpana* — rather inadequately rendered by the English word surrender. If the heart centre is fully opened and the psychic is always in control, then there is no question; all is safe. But the psychic can at any moment be veiled by a lower upsurge. It is only a few who are exempt from these dangers and it is precisely those to whom surrender is easily possible. The guidance of one who is himself by identity or represents the Divine is in this difficult endeavour imperative and indispensable.

11 September 1934

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Nothing is impossible if the nature of the psychic being is awake and leading you with the Mother's consciousness and force behind it and working in you.

19 October 1935

Assimilation of the Mother's Force

Allow a quiet and steady will to progress to be settled in you; learn the habit of a silent, persistent and thorough assimilation of what the Mother puts into you. This is the sound way to advance.

March 1928

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As for the Mother's force, when one receives it the best is to be quiet till it is assimilated; afterwards it is all right, not lost by outward movements or mixing.

24 January 1935

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Ramana Maharshi says that if "you meditate for an hour or two every day, you can then carry on with your duties. If you meditate in the right manner . . . "

A very important qualification.

"then the current of mind induced will continue to flow even in the midst of your work. It is as though there are two ways

of expressing the same idea; the same line which you take in meditation will be expressed in your activities.”⁴

If the meditation brings poise, peace, a concentrated condition or even a pressure or influence, that *can* go on in the work, provided one does not throw it away by a relaxed or dispersed state of consciousness. That was why the Mother wanted people not only to be concentrated at pranam or meditation but to remain silent and absorb or assimilate afterwards and also to avoid things that relax or disperse or dissipate too much — precisely for this reason that so the effects of what she put on them might continue and the change of attitude the Maharshi speaks of will take place. But I am afraid most of the sadhaks have never understood or practised anything of the kind — they could not appreciate or understand her directions.

9 February 1936

Calling the Mother's Force

I tried to meditate, but I simply had to give it up as the mind would not cooperate.

When you cannot meditate, remain quiet and call in the Mother's Peace or Force.

8 April 1933

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Suppose I am in a fix and call down the Mother's force which is above me. Now, how am I to know whether or not it has descended?

By the feeling of it or the result.

And suppose it has descended, and I am doing my lessons — can I then order it to guard me from outer influences and simultaneously keep me in complete touch with the Mother?

⁴ Paul Brunton, *A Search in Secret India* (London: Rider & Company, [1934] 1943), p. 156. The quotation is a paraphrase of Ramana Maharshi's words by Brunton. — Ed.

You can't order anything to the Mother's force; the Mother's force is the manifestation of the Mother herself.

I cannot understand how this force can deal with action.

You think the Mother's force has nothing to do with action or that it is too feeble to act? Or what? What is a force meant for but to act?

26 June 1933

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I am again feeling that depression, but I cannot find out its cause. I feel a burning pain inside me and then some part in me becomes very hostile. There is also some inertia in the nature.

These are the two difficulties, one of the vital dissatisfaction and restlessness, the other of the inertia of the physical consciousness which are the chief obstacles to the sadhana. The first thing to do is to keep detached from them, not to identify yourself mentally with these movements — even if you cannot reject them — next to call on the Mother's force quietly but steadily for it to descend and make the obstacles disappear.

31 January 1934

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My mind becomes quiet for some time, but then many absurd thoughts rush in and I cannot quiet them down. Then I feel very much harrassed. How long will it take to calm down my mind?

What is still restless in the vital has to quiet down for the peace of mind to be even and constant. It has to be controlled, but only control will not be enough. The Mother's Power has to be called always.

10 April 1934

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Please initiate me into a tangible form of Yoga. I make this assurance that I shall follow your instructions to the very letter and refer to you my doubts and difficulties on the way.

There is no method in this Yoga except to concentrate, preferably in the heart, and call the presence and power of the Mother to take up the being and by the workings of her force transform the consciousness; one can concentrate also in the head or between the eyebrows, but for many this is a too difficult opening. When the mind falls quiet and the concentration becomes strong and the aspiration intense, then there is a beginning of experience. The more the faith, the more rapid the result is likely to be. For the rest one must not depend on one's own efforts only, but succeed in establishing a contact with the Divine and a receptivity to the Mother's Power and Presence.

30 November 1934

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When these attacks of illness come, remain quiet and call on the Mother's Force to remove them.

17 February 1936

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To stand separate and not let the mind be overcome, is the first step. The next is to learn how to call down the Mother's Force whenever the attack comes, so that the attack may be pushed away at once or at least very soon before it can affect the outer vital and the body. If that can be done, the body will recover very soon with the inflow of the forces.

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What should I do so that my work becomes an offering? What should I do so that I can always be with the Mother?

What you should do is to have confidence and try to remain always confident and cheerful. If you feel depressed call for the Mother's Force to remove the depression. If you fall ill, call the Mother's Force to cure you. When you work call the Mother's Force to support you and do the work through you.

Receptivity and Openness to the Mother's Force

Do not allow yourself to be troubled or discouraged by any difficulties, but quietly and simply open yourself to the Mother's force and allow it to change you.

10 March 1931

*

When you decided to tell the Mother, it had the effect of opening something in your physical consciousness and the Mother's Force acted. It often happens so—the action of the Mother's Force depends on a certain power of receptivity in the mind or vital or body—and openness is the first necessary condition for the receptivity.

29 May 1933

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How to become one with the Divine?

Open yourself to the Mother's Force and aspire—in time you will become one with the Divine.

15 June 1933

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The vital defects and difficulties are the same in all and also the shortcomings of the mind. One has to open in faith and confidence to the Divine; the Mother's Force will gradually put everything right.

15 September 1933

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I am overcome with disappointment and depression. After reading your last letter, everything crumbled down in a wave. You said you would increase the Mother's light and consciousness in me, but I can't receive them correctly when I feel like this. I used to believe that the Mother was always there to help, but now you have uprooted that blind faith of mine. Why did you write like that? A little encouragement from your side would make me stronger to reach the destination.

I wrote so because the action of the sadhana does not depend on the Mother alone, but also on the attitude, will and openness

of the sadhak. That is a well-known fact of the spiritual life which everybody is supposed to know. The Mother's Force can do everything only when there is a real and true and complete surrender and openness to the Mother. All these things have been written again and again and it ought not to be necessary to repeat it to each one as if it were a new and unheard-of idea.

12 January 1934

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I had a terrible headache today. What is this all about? If it is Yogic in origin, I will have some comfort. Is the Mother breaking some resistances inside?

No. To make people ill in order to improve or perfect them is not Mother's method. But sometimes things like headache come because the brain either tries too much or does not want to receive or makes difficulties. But these Yogic headaches are of a special kind and after the brain has found out the way to receive or respond, they don't come at all.

20 June 1935

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If one remains in full confidence in the Mother and psychically open, then the Mother's force will do all and one has only to give consent and keep oneself open and aspire.

12 November 1935

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It is no use giving way to depression or self-distrust, they are only obstacles to the change you want and which the Mother is working at in you. The suggestions which raise these things are always one-sided and exaggerated and one ought not to listen to them. It is not by his own strength or good qualities that anyone can attain to the divine change; there are only two things that matter, the Mother's force at work and the sadhak's will to open to it and trust in her working. Keep your will and your trust and care nothing for the rest — they are only difficulties that all meet in their sadhana.

13 May 1936

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I feel the descent of the Mother's peace and power and the action of her Force down to the physical. Why then does this trouble still persist? Is the nervous part of my being not receiving the Force or is it receiving it but refusing to change?

The Peace and Force come down, but the nervous weakness also rises up and resists and counteracts their influence and prevents them from settling in the being. That is because your mind assents to the nervous weakness, accepts its suggestions as true, is full of apprehensions and doubts, believes even that it is the Force which creates the nervous trouble. If you fear the action of the Force, how can the Force do its work? 5 September 1936

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It is certain that one's own effort is necessary, though one cannot do the sadhana by one's own effort alone. The Mother's Force is needed, but the sadhak must open himself to it, reject what opposes the Force, put his full sincerity, aspiration, will power into the sadhana. It is only when all is open and there is the full surrender that the Divine Power takes up the sadhana so entirely that personal effort is no longer necessary. But that cannot happen at an early stage — one must go on opening oneself, consecrating oneself, making the surrender till that later stage comes. This has been explained in the book *The Mother*.

17 March 1937

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Open what is closed. The Mother does not withhold her force from anyone — it is there for all in abundance. Her pleasure is in giving her force, not in withholding it. But if you keep your mind filled with thoughts of this kind, about X and others, and your needs and grievances, you shut yourself up in that and there is no room for the higher consciousness and its force to come in.

Pulling the Mother's Force

I am depressed that the Divine has made me meditate the wrong way for three and a half years without letting me know

it was wrong. Why did I feel that I must stimulate my aspiration through great concentration in meditation in order to expedite my progress? Why only now has the Mother told me that I have been meditating in the wrong way, with too much strain and stiffness and tension? This makes me sad beyond words. The more I think about it, the sadder I become. I am so bewildered and confused.

What am I to do? It seems to me that before I was trying to fit the wrong key into the lock of the faery palace, but now I have been left with no key at all.

What is needed is to profit by the discovery and get rid of the impediment. The Mother did not merely point out the impediment; she showed you very expressly how to do it and at that time you understood her, though now (at the time of writing your letter to me) the light which you saw seems to have been clouded by your indulging your vital more and more in the bitter pastime of sadness. That was quite natural, for that is the result sadness always does bring. It is the reason why I object to the gospel of sorrow and to any sadhana which makes sorrow one of its main planks (*abhimāna*, revolt, *viraha*). For sorrow is not, as Spinoza pointed out, a passage to a greater perfection, a way to Siddhi; it cannot be, for it confuses and weakens and distracts the mind, depresses the vital force, darkens the spirit. A relapse from joy and vital elasticity and Ananda to sorrow, self-distrust, despondency and weakness is a recoil from a greater to a lesser consciousness, — the habit of these moods shows a clinging of something in the vital to the smaller, obscurer, dark and distressed movement out of which it is the very aim of Yoga to rise.

It is therefore quite incorrect to say that the Mother took away the wrong key with which you were trying to open the faery palace and left you with none at all. For she not only showed you the true key but gave it to you. It was not a mere vague exhortation to cheerfulness she gave you, but she described exactly the condition felt in the right kind of meditation — a state of inner rest, not of straining, of quiet opening, not of eager or desperate pulling, a harmonious giving of oneself to the Divine Force for its working, and in that quietude a sense

of the Force working and a restful confidence allowing it to act without any unquiet interference. And she asked you if you had not experienced that condition and you said that you had and knew it very well. Now that condition is the beginning of psychic opening and, if you have had it, you know what the psychic opening is; there is of course much more that afterwards comes to complete it but this is the fundamental condition into which all the rest can most easily come. What you should have done was to keep the key the Mother gave you present in your consciousness and apply it—not to go back and allow sadness and a repining view of the past to grow upon you. In this condition which we term the right or psychic attitude, there may and will be call, prayer, aspiration. Intensity, concentration will come of themselves, not by a hard effort or tense strain on the nature. Rejection of wrong movements, frank confession of defects are not only not incompatible, but helpful to it; but this attitude makes the rejection, the confession easy, spontaneous, entirely complete and sincere and effective. That is the experience of all who have consented to take this attitude.

I may say in passing that consciousness and receptivity are not the same thing; one may be receptive, yet externally unaware of how things are being done and of what is being done. The Force works, as I have repeatedly written, behind the veil; the results remain packed behind and come out afterwards, often slowly, little by little, until there is so much pressure that it breaks through somehow and forces itself upon the external nature. There lies the difference between a mental and vital straining and pulling and a spontaneous psychic openness, and it is not at all the first time that we have spoken of the difference. The Mother and myself have written and spoken of it times without number and we have deprecated pulling⁵ and straining and advocated the attitude of psychic openness. It is not really a question of the right or the wrong key, but of putting the key in the lock in the right or the wrong way,—either, because of

⁵ There is a steady drawing of the Force possible which is not what I mean by pulling—drawing of the Force is quite common and helpful.

some difficulty, you try to force the lock turning the key this way and that with violence or confidently and quietly give it the right turn and the door opens.

5 May 1932

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What is meant by pulling? When we want something from the Mother with a vital desire, is it pulling? What is its effect on us?

Yes; that is one kind of pulling — its effect is to blind and confuse the consciousness. But there is also a pulling for right things which is not bad in itself, and most people use — e.g. for Light, Force, Ananda. But it brings more reactions than a quiet opening to the Divine.

1 June 1933

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Can you explain in a few master strokes what you mean by “pulling down”? As I understand it, it is when one makes mental efforts of concentration and meditation without having any eagerness for it.

That is not what is meant by pulling. When one is open and too eager and tries to pull down the force, experience etc. instead of letting it descend quietly, that is called pulling. Many people pull at the Mother’s forces — trying to take more than they can easily assimilate and disturbing the working.

7 April 1935

The Mother's Force and the Forces of the Lower Nature

There is in me a revolt of the vital against the Light resulting in much vital confusion. I hope that one day all my desires and ambition will go away and I will depend completely on the Mother. In the meantime, as these things too come from the Mother, there is nothing to do but wait.

What things? The vital confusion and desires? It is entirely false to say that these things come from the Mother. They come from the lower Nature and its darkness and ignorance. The Mother’s Force is *not* the lower Nature, it is the Power of the Divine

Truth and Light working upon the lower Nature to drive out the confusion and falsehood and desire from it and to transform everything into the Truth and Light.

It is equally false to say "so there is nothing to do but wait". There is something to do and I have repeatedly told you what it is — I have told you not to go down into the lower vital unless you can go there with the Mother's Force and Light supporting you. If you are pushed or fall into the lower vital confusion, then to remain quiet (not discussing or consenting to whirl round in the lower vital chaos), to reject the vital suggestions and experiences and open yourself calling down the Mother's Force to change this part of the being.

Instead of that you begin "experiencing" the chaos and trying to follow every jump and whirl in it and speculating about it with the result that you get falsehoods like these two — the falsehood that "these things too come from the Mother" and the falsehood that "there is nothing to do but wait" and you consent to them!

When will you learn to remember and follow the plain instructions I have given you instead of believing in the ignorant mind and the confused suggestions of this vital chaos?

10 June 1930

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I am practising with the feeling that the Mother is in everything. When I make a mistake, I think: "This also the Mother has done through me to bring me to full consciousness." I believe that the sadhaks cannot consciously commit mistakes.

The Mother does not make people commit mistakes; it is the Prakriti that makes them do it — if the Purusha does not refuse his consent. The Mother here is not this lower Prakriti, but the Divine Shakti and it is her work to press on this lower Nature to change. You can say that under the pressure, the Prakriti stumbles and is unable to reply perfectly and makes mistakes. But it is not the Mother who makes you do wrong movements or does the wrong movements in you — if you think that, you

are in danger of justifying the movements or their continuance.

11 April 1933

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What is the truest and surest means to recognise the Mother's Force when it acts and to distinguish it from other egoistic or ignorant forces?

One has only to be perfectly sincere, not to justify one's own desires and faults by the mind's reasonings, to look impartially and quietly at oneself and one's movements and to call on the Mother's Light — then gradually one will begin to discern everything in that light. Even if it cannot be done perfectly at once, the judgment and feeling will get clearer and surer and a right consciousness of these things will be established.

If a sadhak cannot fully discriminate between the Mother's Force and the egoistic and ignorant forces and cannot reject the lower forces, what will be his condition? And what is the best step for him to take on the path of Yoga?

All these questions are met by my answer. One cannot be perfect in discrimination at once or in rejection either. The one indispensable thing is to go on trying sincerely till there comes the full success. So long as there is complete sincerity, the Divine Grace will be there and assist at every moment on the way.

1 July 1933

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There are two cosmic Forces — one the higher Cosmic Shakti which is a form of the Mother, the other a Power of the Ignorance. You have not to open to the latter, only to the Mother.

25 October 1933

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I told you that when I make some mistake, then the lower forces rise up to trouble me, but you replied: "It is not necessarily due to some mistake or fault that they rise." But my

experience is that so long as the Mother's name is on my lips nothing undivine can touch me. It is only when I am careless and forget to say her name that mistakes occur.

And what does the carelessness come from? It is because the habit of the lower nature makes you forget. That is an action of the lower forces. It is only by the higher force meeting the lower forces and its pressure on them (this is the contact) that the habit of forgetfulness disappears. 25 January 1935

*

How is it that the Mother cannot or will not move the hostile forces to action, since even the Asura and Rakshasa and Pisacha are her children?

As for the Asuric forces, their movement is part of the ordinary cosmic movement in the Ignorance, but Mother is not here to encourage that movement, but to bring down the higher Truth in which they have no place. If then she moves the hostile Forces to act against her and her work and the sadhaks (which they are quite ready enough to do of themselves), it would mean that she is working against herself and trying to frustrate her own purpose in being here! Such an action would be absurd in the extreme. 8 April 1935

The Mother's Force and the Three Gunas

When one feels that it is the Mother's Force that acts through one and not one's own force, is it the Mother's Force alone that works in one's actions while the gunas remain quiescent?

No, the gunas are there and not quiescent — for they are the instrumentation. If the force and the inner consciousness are very strong then there is a tendency for the rajas to become like some inferior form of tapas and the tamas to become more like a kind of inert shama. That is how the transformation begins, but usually it is very slow in its process. 29 January 1936

Conditions for the Working of the Mother's Force

When you can receive the Mother's peace in the mind and heart, it will act on the vital also and calm it. Once the vital is calm then force can be there in it and give it strength.

There is no intention of test or ordeal. But for the Mother's force to act certain conditions are necessary. There must be a certain acceptance, a will steady and persistent to reject what comes in the way of her action and to receive her force alone.

But why should you be always thinking about X or others? You have very little to do with X now, and it is no use thinking only of the past. Leave him to the Mother to deal with and forget all that.

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If ego-sense comes back upon you so strongly, it must be because something in you admits it. The Mother's force is there always and can help you to get rid of these things, but you on your part must with faith and sincerity accept the Mother and put yourself entirely on her side so as to make it possible for the Force to work with effect. When bad thoughts come, you must reject them, not assent to them in your mind, not give voice to them in your speech, not believe in them or their suggestions. These things cannot vanish in a day, but if you do like that, they will diminish and lose their power to lay strong hold of you and disturb you, and in the end they will disappear. 21 April 1932

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I wish to become ceaseless in aspiration. I feel that it is the Mother's Force that is aspiring in me. But if the Mother herself does not increase my aspiration through her Grace, how can I become ceaseless in it?

It is true that it is the Mother's Force that aspires in you, but if the personal consciousness does not give its assent, then the Force does not work. If the personal consciousness ceaselessly looks for the Divine and assents to the working, then aspiration

and the working of the Force becomes also ceaseless.

9 April 1933

Discrimination and the Working of the Mother's Force

It is dangerous to think of giving up "all barrier of discrimination and defence against what is trying to descend" upon you. Have you thought what this would mean if what is descending is something not in consonance with the divine Truth, perhaps even adverse? An Adverse Power could ask no better condition for getting control over the seeker. It is only the Mother's Force and the divine Truth that one should admit without barriers. And even there one must keep the power of discernment in order to detect anything false that comes masquerading as the Mother's Force and the divine Truth, and keep too the power of rejection that will throw away all mixture.

Keep faith in your spiritual destiny, draw back from error and open more the psychic being to the direct guidance of the Mother's light and power. If the central will is sincere, each recognition of a mistake can become a stepping-stone to a truer movement and a higher progress.

24 May 1930

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How to recognise that a particular thought, feeling or impulse to action has come from the Mother herself and not from some universal force or anything else? If it is apparently a force from the Falsehood it can be recognised as such, but there are many others of a different character and sometimes one goes on thinking that they are prompted by the Mother from within.

It can only be done by discrimination, care, sincerity, a constant control with regard to the mind's movements and the growth of a certain kind of psychic tact which detects any mental imitation or false suggestion of its being the Mother's.

27 April 1933

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About my weaknesses you have mentioned the "inertia and fundamental resistance in the consciousness". How can I become free of them?

There is only one rule for all these things — to watch oneself closely so as to detect these things always when they show themselves, to reject them always and persistently when seen, to aspire always for their removal, to call always the Force of the Mother to help to remove them. But the most entirely effective thing is if you can feel the Force of the Mother working in you and support its action always.

29 June 1933

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You have written: "But the most entirely effective thing is if you can feel the Force of the Mother working in you and support its action always." What is the meaning of "support its action always"?

To support its action means that one must recognise the Mother's force when it acts and distinguish it from other egoistic or ignorant forces and give assent to the one and refuse the others. It is again a general rule — its application each sadhaka has to see for himself.

1 July 1933

*

The Mother's Force may do everything but one has to become more and more conscious of one's own being and nature and what is below in it.

It is not a question of mental judgment, — that is of little use in these matters, — but of the consciousness feeling and seeing.

Supermind is not organised in the lower planes as the others are. It is only a veiled influence. Otherwise the supramental realisation would be easy.

22 May 1934

*

As to the Force, you said, "It creates its own activities in the mind or elsewhere." In that case does the mind or any other part on which the Force acts express only what the Force has created?

That is the ideal condition when the Force is the true Force only — but there is too much mixture in the nature for that to be possible at this stage of sadhana.

3 August 1934

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You say: "That is the ideal condition when the Force is the true Force only." Does this mean that what my consciousness feels as the Force is not the real Force of the Mother?

I have said that it gets mixed with the action of the present mind, vital and body. That is inevitable since it has to work upon them. It is only after the transformation that it can be fully the Mother's Force with no mixture of the separate personality. If the Divine Force in all its perfection without mixture were to act from the beginning, not taking any account of the present nature, then there would be no sadhana, only a miraculous substitution of the Divine for the human without any reason or process.

4 August 1934

Mental Knowledge and the Working of the Mother's Force

During the evening meditation my mind tries to become conscious of the thoughts which the Mother brings down. Is this the right activity?

It is not altogether the way — if the mind is active it is more difficult to become aware of what the Mother is bringing. It is not thoughts she brings, but the higher light, force etc.

22 March 1933

*

With reference to the Mother you once said, "Ask for the consciousness of her force." Does it mean that I should aspire to know her consciousness and her force?

Yes — not know with the mind only, but to feel them and see them with the inner experience.

18 June 1933

*

My mind fails to make out the present state of the being. It does not understand what the Mother's Force is doing.

Plenty of people progress rapidly without understanding what the Force is doing — they simply observe and describe and say "I leave all to the Mother." Eventually the knowledge and understanding come.

17 July 1933

The Mother's Force and the Body

When can it be said that the material being is ready for the Divine?

If the material consciousness is open, feels the Mother's Force working in it and responds, then it is ready.

11 June 1933

*

I feel the Mother's light, peace, beauty, joy and love descending from above into each strand of my hair. The whole body, calm and still, becomes absorbed in deep peace.

It can be there in all the atoms of the body since all is secretly conscious.

5 October 1933

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One thing I wish to say about the condition of my body: Do not arrange any medication for me. Medicines are insignificant compared to the Mother's Force and Compassion. Everything will come all right through her Love and Force — this is my strong faith.

For the Mother's Force to work fully in the body, the body itself and not only the mind must have faith and be open.

9 October 1933

*

I pray that the Mother's Force may help my body. Kindly let me keep her Light and by that Light mould me through Peace and Love.

Aspire and concentrate for the purification and illumination of the vital. The vital once clear with the Mother's Light and Force in it, it will be easier for the Force to work on the body.

11 October 1933

*

Today while I was sitting with others, slowly something came down and filled up all my body. The body became very heavy, like a statue — I could not move. My body, especially the chest, was expanding. Peace! Calm! Ananda! Afterwards, the upper portion of my body slowly became smaller and smaller. Then something entered from the soles of my feet, and I came back to the physical consciousness.

That is very good. It is the Force and Presence of the Mother from above that comes down like that into the body — first in the head and chest and afterwards into the whole body. It is the first fundamental experience of the sadhana from which all the rest begins — for until it comes all else is only preparation. Very often it takes people years to bring it into the body, and with most it comes only by degrees. That it should come in a mass like that and even down to the chest shows that what I told you was true — that once you get free from the old obstacles that were obstructing you, you can have the Yoga experiences as well as anyone else here.

3 December 1933

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Is the heat that I felt in the body the heat of the fever or the heat of the Mother's Force? It exerted a tremendous pressure on my mind, life and body.

That has still to be seen. It is most probably the tapas heat; the question is whether it is turned partially in the body into fever.

7 June 1936

*

It is quite true that the Mother has been putting a constant pressure of her Force to help you in overcoming this illness. I

am very glad you have been so vividly aware of it. We do not think it is correct that the Mother can only take the pain away but cannot replace the organs in their right place. This also is possible for the spiritual Force to effect in time. But it is desirable that you should not allow any inner condition of yours which makes the working easy to yield to one like those you speak of which would make it difficult by allowing the old forces to return. Even if that happens, the Mother will still work of course to restore the previous condition until the thing is set right. But a continuous openness is very desirable.

22 October 1936

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Mother is not opposed to your going to Madras for treatment if you feel it necessary; but she is not at all sure that it will result in a radical cure — it may or it may not and, if it does not, it may return worse; so neither can she recommend your going. It depends on your own decision.

The illness has no doubt a physical cause, but there is associated with it a strong resistance to the Force — which is evidently seated in the subconscious, since you are not aware of it. This is shown by the fact that after Mother put a concentrated force there yesterday, the whole thing returned more violently after an hour's relief. That is always a sign of a violent and obstinate resistance somewhere. It is only if this is overcome or disappears that complete relief can come.

Your experiences related in the letter were quite sound and very good. There is no delusion about the Force working in the body, but there are evidently points where there is still much resistance. The body consciousness has many parts and many different movements and all do not open or change together. Also the body is very dependent on the subconscious which has to be cleared and illumined before the body can be free from adverse reactions.

15 April 1938

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The Mother's Force is always pouring down — your body must

now forget its habit of depression or sadness. Let the happiness come into it also.

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First the Mother organises the inner parts of the being; then she begins to work on the outer being. Does this mean that when the inner parts are brought under control, then she begins to work on the physical nature?

It is the usual course, but some work is always being done in the inner parts at all times, because they are interdependent.

The Mother's Therapeutic Force

While working, I suddenly felt a pressure of weakness, a depression in the chest. When I became conscious of it, I opened myself and called the Mother's force. After a few minutes it disappeared. Was it the divine strength that supported me in some mysterious way, or was it the inherent strength of the body that awakened?

The inherent strength of the body does not do things like that. It is the Mother's force that does it, when one calls and opens oneself. Even people who never did Yoga and are conscious of nothing, get cured like that without knowing the reason or feeling the way in which it was done. The Force comes from above or in descending it envelops and comes from without inside or it comes out from inside after descending there. When you are conscious of the play of the Forces, then you feel the working.

5 May 1933

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When I got up from sleep, I found that a cold had already entered my head. My consciousness brought down the Mother's Force and the cold disappeared. Formerly the consciousness used to say passively, "Let the Force work it out", but the effect was not the same. I want to know if the method adopted for the Force is quite the right way.

It is quite the right way. It is very good that you are learning to
use the Force.

27 August 1934

*

Every time I receive the Mother's touch at Pranam, I feel a sense of strong nourishment, even in the physical being. When she presses her fingers on the opening point of the spinal cord at the top of my head, I feel something subtle coming in which makes my inner being overflow with joy. This sense of nourishment (as if a new substance is being created within) is so strong that even when I am unwell and weak, it completely dominates with its sense of joy and security.

As you suffer from ill-health, Mother presses the nourishment of the divine strength and health into your physical being, renewing its substance with that.

4 November 1934

*

If we want the Mother to help someone outside with her Force, but we give her wrong information, does the help she sends miss its mark or does it go automatically where it should? Yesterday I suppose the Mother acted before X gave the wrong information about my uncle, but if she had been misinformed from the start, what would have happened?

Yes, Mother had worked before, but wrong information coming across the working creates a confusion so that it is no longer possible to say what is the result of the working. Of course if the wrong information came at the beginning, it would be still worse. It is very necessary that information given should be correct.

10 June 1935

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I remember the Mother once saying that there is hardly a disease that cannot be cured by Yoga. I was surprised, much surprised, and thought, "What about cancer, then, the most deadly enemy of present civilisation? Can it be cured by Yoga?" What is your opinion?

Of course it can, but on condition of faith or openness or both. Even a mental suggestion can cure cancer — with luck, of course, as is shown by the case of the woman operated on unsuccessfully for cancer, but the doctors lied and told her it had succeeded. Result, cancer symptoms all ceased and she died many years afterwards of another illness altogether.

11 October 1935

*

I had a heated but pleasant discussion with X about the action of the healing force. He argued: "Now that the healing force has arrived here, it is likely to operate in other parts of the world and any Tom, Dick and Harry can wield it even if not spiritually developed."

It may operate but not through every T, D and H, at first at least.

I contended that the healing force will act only if a man is open to the Mother in some way, through devotion, faith or some kind of rapport. I also said that most probably the healing force can act only if the healer is directly in physical contact with her. Certain conditions are necessary for cure. What do you say?

At first it will be no doubt like that if it is to be the true Force, but when once it is settled in the earth-consciousness a more general use of supraphysical force for healing may become possible.

It is not always necessary either that the rapport you speak of should be conscious. Coué for instance was in rapport with the Mother without knowing it — she told me of his getting something of the force and of the beginning of his work long before he was known to anyone (of course she did not know his name but she described him and his work in such a way that the identification was evident).

3 February 1936

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X writes that her hip-joint pain is gone and wants me to thank the Mother for removing it. She calculates that her first letter to me mentioning the pain must have reached me on Thursday and her hip pain almost vanished miraculously at eight in the

evening that day. But I did not write to the Mother about X's complaint until Friday. Could it be that when X's letter entered the Ashram atmosphere a response came?

Y spoke to the Mother about X's pain on the same day—so it is not necessary to suppose an automatic effect of the letter itself. But such an automatic effect does often take place either immediately after writing or when the letter enters the Mother's atmosphere.

17 April 1936

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I generally rely in my practice on medicines impregnated with the Mother's force. X is now convinced that there is nothing of any medicine left after potentisation except Homeopathic philosophy (the Mother's force). What is *your* opinion?

I never have opinions — except for the purpose of writing or conversation. To the eye of the Yогин all opinions are true and all are false. It is only realities and results that matter. The Mother's force is a reality and the cure is a result — the medicine is perhaps a phenomenal link between the two.

2 June 1936

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It was precisely out of solicitude for you because the suffering of insomnia and the spasms had been excessive that I proposed to you to take the help of treatment. It is a fact of my experience that when the resistance in the body is too strong and persistent, it can help to take some aid of physical means as an instrumentation for the Force to work more directly on the body itself; for the body then feels itself supported against the resistance from both sides, by means both physical as well as supraphysical. The Mother's force can work through both together.

1 September 1936

*

In the last two weeks there has been no improvement in my nervous trouble. I had the belief that the Mother's look and grace at the Sunday Pranam would ease my situation, but it has not. Shall I undergo medical treatment or rely solely on

the Mother's grace and influence which I shall receive at the Sunday Pranam?

Sunday Pranams are not the only way of receiving Force, one can do it at any time by opening to receive in a quiet concentration. If you can do that, any illness can be cured either at once or, if it is chronic, in time. That should be done in any case. But where there is not the full openness, medical treatment can help as an auxiliary. If you like to consult X, he may be able to understand better your case than by second hand and you can see whether you would care to try any remedies he suggests.

28 March 1937

Receiving the Mother's Force at a Distance

I write from Comilla to present to you the sad story of a sad person's life. For over twenty-five years I have suffered from leucorrhoea. I have taken all kinds of treatments, but never succeeded in removing it. My body is becoming weaker day by day. I feel that no doctor can remedy this disease. You and the Mother have come on earth to remove people's sufferings. I pray that you will rid this poor thing of her sufferings for ever.

It is possible for her to be cured,⁶ but only if she has sufficient and complete faith and can receive the force of the Mother. If she can put herself into the true contact, she will cure.

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As to what your other friend asks, it is quite possible for him to receive where he is without coming here if he has the adoration of the Mother in his heart and an intense call. 25 August 1935

*

You spoke of my friend X as receiving the Mother's Force.

⁶ Written by Sri Aurobindo to his secretary, who replied to the enquirer.—Ed.

“*In contact with*” the Divine Force which is the force of the Mother — that was what I wrote, I believe.

But which Mother?

How many Mothers are there?

Ours or some universal Mother as people say?

Who is this some universal Mother? How many of these some universal Mothers are there?

I ask because I do not understand how, without invoking the Mother, he gets her Force.

Have you not put him by the photograph and his letter in connection with us? Has he not turned in this direction? Has he not met Y and been impressed by him — a third channel of contact? That is quite sufficient to help him to a contact if he has the faith and the Yogic stress in him.

2 February 1936

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Has Mother really been sending force to my friend?

I don't know whether Mother is sending force in the accepted sense; I haven't asked her. In any case anyone can receive the force who has faith and sincerity, whose psychic being has begun to wake and who opens himself, — whether he knows or not that he is receiving. If X even imagines that he is receiving, that may open the way to a real reception, — if he *feels* it, why question his feeling? He is certainly trying hard to change and that is the first necessity; if one tries it can always be done, in more or less time.

28 June 1943

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It was 1 a.m. at night when my brother in excruciating pain called me and asked if Sri Aurobindo could heal him. I took out some Prasad flowers that were with me and touched the

affected part with them. And lo! the pain vanished and he began to recover. I want to know if you were aware of this and heard my prayer.

What happens in such cases is that when someone is accepted, the Mother sends out something of herself to him and this is with him wherever he goes and is always in connection with her being here. So when he does anything like what you did in this case with faith and bhakti, it reaches, through that emanation of herself which is with him, the Mother's consciousness inner or outer and the Force goes in return for the result.

Sadhana through Work for the Mother

Finding the Mother's Force in Work and Action

Yesterday I worked with great vigour and after I saw Mother in the evening I felt that there was no physical tiredness at all and that I could work for twelve hours more.

It is the Mother's energy that comes down into the vital and physical for those who are open.

12 February 1933

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I told you that I could work peacefully at the Granary, but alas, I am unable to do so. As I sit quietly doing my work, X comes and starts talking about many things and creates a disturbance in me. I pray that you will help me.

You must be able to find the Mother in work and action as well as in concentration and silence. It is quite possible even if there is the silence within you and no restless movement, to move and act and do all that is needful. It is in fact when all within is silent, free from desire and with no restless movement that the Mother's force can act best and do things in the right way. You should aspire to the Mother for the right force to act and do work and find her in the work and action.

31 May 1933

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When I do any work for myself or do any work as my own, I get tired. But my mind realises now that this tiredness comes because I have not offered the work to my Divine Parents.

If there is the full surrender in the work and you feel it is the Mother's and that the Mother's force is working in you, then fatigue does not come.

July 1933

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During the work, is it good to go on thinking: "It is the Mother who does the work through us"?

If it is *work*, you can always do that, provided you realise that it depends on the instrument whether the Mother's force works fully or not.

But if we think it is the Mother who is working through us, wrong movements may hide in the disguise of the Mother?

If you think all your actions come from the Mother, then of course it will have that effect — the actions come from Prakriti. Work is a different matter, for it is the Mother's work you are doing.

16 August 1933

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Today I felt as if someone other than myself was carrying out my actions. Of course I was there, but in the background. Was it not the Mother's Force trying to take me into itself integrally?

It is too much to say that. What you say amounts only to some glimpse of the cosmic Force behind all the actions.

2 June 1934

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Everybody is in the Mother, but one must become conscious of that, not of the work only.

1 April 1935

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The feeling that all one does is from the Divine, that all action is the Mother's is a necessary step in experience, but one cannot remain in it — one has to go farther. Those can remain in it who do not want to change the nature, but only to have the experience of the Truth behind it. Your action is according to universal Nature and in that again it is according to your individual nature, and all Nature is a force put out by the Divine Mother for the action of the universe. But as things are it is an action in the Ignorance and the ego; while what we want is an action of the divine Truth

unveiled and undeformed by the Ignorance and the ego.

So when you feel that your actions are all done by the force (শক্তি) of the Mother, that is a true experience. But the will of the Mother (মায়ের ইচ্ছা) is that all you do should be done not by her force in Nature as now, but her own direct force in the Truth of her nature, the higher divine Nature. So also it was correct, what you thought afterwards, that unless there is this change, the experience that all you do is done by her will cannot be altogether true. So it will not be permanent till then. For if it were permanent now, it might keep you in the lower action as it does many and prevent or retard the change. What you need as a permanent experience now is that of the Mother's Force working in you in all things to change this ignorant consciousness and nature into her divine consciousness and nature.

It is the same with the truth about the instrument. It is true that each being is an instrument of the cosmic Shakti, therefore of the Mother. But the aim of the sadhana is to become a conscious and perfect instrument instead of one that is unconscious and therefore imperfect. You can be a conscious and perfect instrument only when you are no longer acting in obedience to the ignorant push of the lower nature, but in surrender to the Mother and aware of her higher Force acting within you. So here too your intuition was perfectly true.

But all this cannot be done in a day. So you are once more right in not being anxious or uneasy. One must be vigilant, but not anxious and uneasy, ব্যগ্র. The Mother's Force will act and bring the result in its own time — provided one offers all to her and aspires and is vigilant, calling and remembering her at all times, rejecting quietly all that stands in the way of the action of her transforming Force. Your second view of this was more from the right angle of vision than the first. To say that it is not I who have to act, so I need not mind, is to say too much — one has to act in so far as one has to aspire, offer oneself, assent to the Mother's working, reject all else, more and more surrender. All else will be done in time; there is no need for anxiety or depression or impatience.

13 July 1935

What is meant by being an instrument or being used by the Mother's Force? When one acts on impulse, often it is a wrong movement — how can that be a case of being an instrument? When you wrote to X, "You are being used as an effective instrument", did you write it as a temporary encouragement?

So long as one is not conscious of the Force working through one, one is moved by the Prakriti. The Prakriti may be used sometimes by the Divine for some work to be done, but that is not what is meant in the Yoga by being an "instrument". I do not know to what you refer as regards X, — his poetry was inspired by us and he felt it and it certainly helped several people; to that extent he was an effective instrument for the work so long as he was in the right attitude. Naturally, it is for the work that one can be an instrument, not for things like sex which have nothing to do with the Yoga or the work. But the real instrumentality begins when the consciousness of the Force working begins within.

30 October 1935

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In a letter about work Sri Aurobindo says: "As for the dedication make the *sankalpa* always of offering it, remember and pray when you can. . . . This is to fix a certain attitude. Afterwards, the Force can take advantage of this key to open the deeper dedication within." May I know in what terms this deeper dedication can be expressed?

One begins to feel a double consciousness, one an inner being within which is always dedicated, spontaneously and silently full of the devotion to the Mother or aware of her Force working or of her presence or all these together and another the outer through which the work is done.

1936

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During work, the consciousness, however high it was before, falls at once into inertia. Is this condition never to change?

It is not necessary to fall into inertia, but one always comes into a less intensity of consciousness during work unless one

has established in work the conscious contact with the Mother's Force and is aware of that during the work or unless one has developed a double consciousness, the inner concentrated, the outer doing the work.

12 April 1936

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You seem to have written to X that there is a special force for the work and, if it is brought down, its action need not remain a separate thing from meditation. What is this special force for work?

It is the Mother's force, naturally.

16 May 1936

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It is only when work and action are done in that way, without insistence on one's personal ideas and personal feelings but only for the Divine's sake without thought of self that work becomes fully a sadhana and the internal and the external nature can arrive at a harmony. It makes it more possible for the inner being to take up and enlighten the outer action and grow conscious of the Mother's force behind it guiding it in its works.

3 January 1937

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Should one try to put out the Mother's Force during work, if one is conscious of it?

It is the Mother's Force that has to work through the sadhak, not the sadhak who has to work through the Mother's Force.

If one is not yet conscious of her Force, should one put out one's inner energy in work? How is the inner energy related to the outer energy?

The first stage is when one works with the outer energy, but there is an inner consciousness supporting it which relies wholly on the Mother. The second is when there is an inner consciousness and force which uses the outer instruments — the outer energy

being quiescent or else a part only of the inner — while this inner consciousness knows that the force is the Mother's or feels the Mother's presence in it: there are different experiences in this respect. The third is when all is the Mother's Force working.

10 April 1937

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There are two ways of making an offering to the Mother: one is to offer an act at her feet as one might offer a flower; the other is to withdraw one's personality and feel as though she were doing all the actions. Which of these ways is better for the sadhana?

There is no need to ask which is the better as they are not mutually exclusive. It is the mind that regards them as opposites. The psychic being can offer the act while the nature is passive to the Force (the ego being expunged or having withdrawn) and feels the Mother's Force doing the act and her Presence in it.

5 November 1938

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Efface the stamp of ego from the heart and let the love of the Mother take its place. Cast from the mind all insistence on your personal ideas and judgments, then you will have the wisdom to understand her. Let there be no obsession of self-will, ego-drive in the action, love of personal authority, attachment to personal preference, then the Mother's force will be able to act clearly in you and you will get the inexhaustible energy for which you ask and your service will be perfect.

27 November 1940

Work for the Mother in the Integral Yoga

To go entirely inside in order to have experiences and to neglect the work, the external consciousness, is to be unbalanced, one-sided in the sadhana — for our Yoga is integral; so also to throw oneself outward and live in the external being alone is to be unbalanced, one-sided in the sadhana. One must have the same

consciousness in inner experience and outward action and make both full of the Mother.

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There should be not only a general attitude, but each work should be offered to the Mother so as to keep the attitude a living one all the time. There should be at the time of work no meditation, for that would withdraw the attention from the work, but there should be the constant memory of the One to whom you offer it. This is only a first process; for when you can have constantly the feeling of a calm being within concentrated in the sense of the Divine Presence while the surface mind does the work, or when you can begin to feel always that it is the Mother's force that is doing the work and you are only a channel or an instrument, then in place of memory there will have begun the automatic constant realisation of Yoga, divine union, in works.

April 1930

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Those who do work for the Mother in all sincerity, are prepared by the work itself for the right consciousness even if they do not sit down for meditation or follow any particular practice of Yoga. It is not necessary to tell you how to meditate; whatever is needful will come of itself if in your work and at all times you are sincere and keep yourself open to the Mother.

15 March 1932

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The Mother does not think that it is good to give up all work and only read and meditate. Work is part of the Yoga and it gives the best opportunity for calling down the Presence, the Light and the Power into the vital and its activities; it increases also the field and the opportunity of surrender.

It is not enough to remember that the work is the Mother's — and the results also. You must learn to feel the Mother's force behind you and to open to the inspiration and the guidance. Always to remember by an effort of the mind is too difficult;

but if you get into the consciousness in which you feel always the Mother's force in you or supporting you, that is the true thing.

18 August 1932

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The Mother refuses to relieve you of all work — work is a necessary part of this Yoga. If you do not do work and spend all the time in "meditation", you and your sadhana will lose all hold of realities; you will lose yourself in uncontrolled subjective imaginations such as those you are now allowing to control you and lead you into actions — like your absenting yourself from Pranam, becoming fanciful and irregular in your taking of food, coming to the Mother at a wrong time and place under the imagination that she has called you — actions dictated by error and false suggestion and not by Truth. It is by doing work for the Mother with surrender to her, with obedience to her expressed will, without fancies and vital self-will that you can remain in touch with the embodied Mother here and progress in the Yoga. Mere subjective experiences without control by us will not lead you to the Truth and may lead you far from it into sheer confusion and error.

If you do not want to do the B. D. [*Building Department*] account and letter work, you can take up the work of keeping the gate daily from 12 to 2; but it is better if you combine this gate work with the typing of letters whenever needed. If you do not want to do the gate work, then you must go on with the work you now have. If you take the gate work only, you must hand over the typewriter to the B. D. so that it may continue to be used for the work you were doing up till now.

I must warn you that by withdrawing into a one-sided subjective existence within and by pushing away from you all touch with physical realities, you are running into a wrong path and imperilling your sadhana. What happens to sadhaks who do this is that they make a mental Formation and put it in place of the true embodied Mother here, and then under its inspiration they begin to lose touch with her and disobey her and follow the false suggestions of their mental Formation. The first thing it does is

to instigate them not to write to her, not to come to Pranam, not to act as regards food, work etc. on the lines laid down by her, to disobey her — as you have disobeyed her with regard to coming to Pranam this morning. Another very bad sign of this false condition is when they feel not in touch with the Mother when they meet her in the body and guided only by some disembodied Mother in their own egoistic consciousness — that is a sure sign that a Falsehood is getting into their sadhana. As regards their way of life, they do not wish to do like the others, but to have a special way of life of their own, governed by some Imagination within them. All this you must stop. You must come to Pranam regularly, take your food regularly, sleep regularly, do the work given you conscientiously, following the lines laid down for this Asram by the Mother, and through a right consciousness in this life you must realise her Truth in the physical existence.

Your unwillingness to come to the Pranam because that would interrupt some subjective experience is altogether out of place. No experience in formal meditation, not a hundred experiences together can be worth the touch of the Mother in the Pranam. If you had the psychic being in front in the physical or even in the heart and the vital, you would feel that at once. Moreover, these experiences are not supramental as you seem to imagine. The supramental Truth could never stand behind such errors as you are making now. Moreover to get the supramental Light is not so easy as you fancy; I have warned again and again the sadhaks against the error of thinking they are already in possession of the supermind or in touch with it. One has to go through a long and patient development through many lower stages of consciousness before one can be even within measurable distance of the supermind.

All attachment and self-indulgence are dangerous — attachment and self-indulgence in subjective experiences and remote “meditations”, pushing aside the Truth in objective life is as dangerous as any other. Draw back from these errors and get back into the true balance of the sadhana. If you want the psychic in the physical, you cannot get it by merely sitting in meditation and having abstract experiences; you can get it only by seeking

it in physical life and action, by work for the Mother, obedience and surrender in work to the Mother who is present in her own body here.

15 September 1932

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When I am alone for some time, I feel aspiration in the heart, peace and Samata. I feel as if nothing can disturb me. But when I come out to work or move here and there and mix with others, I lose this feeling. Why does it happen like this?

It is the difficulty of being calm and surrendered in action and movement; when there is no action and one is simply sitting still, it is easy to be quiet.

How can this weakness be rejected from the nature so that I can live in peace and Samata in the midst of work and everywhere?

By rejecting ego and desire and living and working for the Divine alone.

Will those who live in peace and Samata but do not work for the Mother's sake or do little work be transformed fully?

No; they do not get transformed at all.

7 May 1933

*

If one works with an attitude of service and love, but does not meditate, will it not lead to stagnation from an inner standpoint? Many say, "We are doing Mother's work and that is sufficient."

If they do it in the right spirit, then it may be sufficient for them, as it will bring the rest—because of the spirit in which they do it. It is a matter of idiosyncrasy—there are some who cannot get anything by meditation, so that work or bhakti is their only resource.

24 May 1933

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People say, "As long as the lower nature is not fully purified, it is dangerous to do a lot of meditation. If one meditates too much before one has become purified by means of work, things might rise up from the lower nature and upset the sadhak. When the higher forces come down into a nature not sufficiently purified through work, it is difficult to bear the descent of the divine forces."

It is not the descent of the higher or divine forces that upsets a sadhak, it is his acceptance of forces of falsehood through ambition, vanity, desire to be a great Yogi or an attachment to his experiences without regard to their truth or their source.

It is not well to spend the whole time or the greater part of the time in meditation unless one is very strong in mind—for one gets into a habit of living in an inner world entirely and losing touch with external realities—this brings in a one-sided inharmonious movement and may lead to disturbance of balance. To do both meditation and work and dedicate both to the Mother is the best thing.

6 August 1933

*

My thoughts, emotions and sensations are all turned towards the Mother. But how can I make them serve her in practical life? I still make mistakes and do not always get the right inspiration.

That depends on the physical mind. It has to learn to stop listening to itself and following its own ideas and to call seriously and persistently for the inspiration of the Mother—your physical mind has to become a portion of hers, answering at once and accurately to whatever comes from her.

27 December 1933

*

X says that he cannot feel your presence during work as he can during meditation. He does not understand how work can help him.

He has to learn to consecrate his work and feel the Mother's

power working through it. A purely sedentary subjective realisation is only a half realisation.

23 January 1934

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I pray that I may feel the Mother's protection while working.
I feel happy to work. I am not able to meditate every day, but
as long as I am working I feel that the work itself is sadhana.

Work for the Mother done with the right concentration on her
is as much a sadhana as meditation and inner experiences.

14 March 1934

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During physical pursuits, I find that the Mother's Force takes
them up. But when I am not working, what should I aspire for?

For the Mother's power to work and bring down by the proper
stages the higher consciousness. Also for the system to be more
and more fit — quiet, egoless, surrendered.

5 June 1934

*

It is not our experience that by meditation alone it is possible to change the nature, nor has retirement from outward activity and work much profited those who have tried it; in many cases it has been harmful. A certain amount of concentration, an inner aspiration in the heart and an opening of the consciousness to the Mother's presence there and to the descent from above are needed. But without action, without work the nature does not really change; it is there and by contact with men that there is the test of the change in the nature. As for the work one does, there is no higher or lower work; all work is the same provided it is offered to the Mother and done for her and in her power.

You have probably taken too much work on yourself by adding to the rest accounts, etc. That was not necessary. There is no reason why you should not do a normal amount and have time and energy for meditation as well. If you wish, however, to change, Mother may consider it, though she does not just now see how to arrange.

6 October 1934

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This [*experience of the true attitude*] happens when the work is always associated with the Mother's thought, done as an offering to her, with the call to do it through you. All ideas of ego, all association of egoistic feelings with the work must disappear. One begins to feel the Mother's force doing the work; the psychic grows through a certain inner attitude behind the work and the adhar becomes open both to the psychic intuitions and influences from within and to the descent from above. Then the result of meditation can come through the work itself.

5 May 1936

*

Just as you give yourself through work to the Mother doing all for her, so there is an inner giving or consecration. Ordinarily the mind and vital live for themselves, want this or that, seek after it and feel dissatisfied and unfulfilled if they do not get it. But when they give themselves, this ceases. Whatever the Mother does with them that they accept—ask for nothing, rely on her entirely, live for her will and not for their desires. Then they begin to be empty of their old selves and old movements, fill with the presence of the Mother, the will of the Mother, the workings of the Mother—that becomes all their life.

27 July 1936

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Once in an interview the Mother told me, "Why do you make any difference between me and work?" I am not sure if I have been able to reproduce the exact words, but they are almost like that. I pray to you to make the idea a little more explicit.

As it stands, it has no meaning. What Mother must have said is "Why do you make any separation between me and work?" It is she who is doing the work, she is there in it, so it is a mistake to make an opposition between concentration on her and the work. Her presence is there in both.

1936

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This state of mind, described in your letter, must be due to a tension created by an urge in the psychic to make a complete

surrender to the Mother and some obstruction in the vital mind and surface intellect. This mind supports the obstruction by an excessive self-depreciation (not well-founded as a sound and just self-examination would be) and a questioning of all you do so that you can see only defects and wrong motives. That creates unrest, doubt and strain and hampers your sadhana and prevents the psychic impulse from acting freely.

You should do your work simply in the confidence that it is accepted and appreciated by the Mother, as indeed it is,—for your work has been very good and helpful to her. Let the psychic movement express itself simply and spontaneously in action without allowing the outer mind to interfere; that would very likely release the tension and then your sadhana could proceed in a quiet cheerfulness, confident of its own truth and the Mother's loving acceptance.

6 December 1943

Work for the Mother as Karmayoga

He should carry on his work and do all things else in the right consciousness, offering all he does to the Mother and keeping in inner touch with her. All work done in that spirit and with that consciousness becomes Karmayoga and can be regarded as part of his sadhana.

10 March 1932

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What you received and kept in the work is indeed the true basic consciousness of Karmayoga — the calm consciousness from above supporting and the strength from above doing the work, with that the Bhakti which feels it to be the Mother's consciousness present and working. You know now by experience what is the secret of Karmayoga.

15 September 1936

Following the Mother's Will

The conditions for following the Mother's will are to turn to her for Light and Truth and Strength, to aspire that no other force shall influence or lead you, to make no demands or conditions

in the vital, to keep a quiet mind ready to receive the Truth but not insisting on its own ideas and formations,— finally, to keep the psychic awake and in front, so that you may be in constant contact and know truly what her will is; for the mind and vital can mistake other impulsions and suggestions for the Divine Will, but the psychic once awakened makes no mistake.

A perfect perfection in working is only possible after supramentalisation; but a relative good working is possible on the lower planes if one is in contact with the Divine and careful, vigilant and conscious in mind and vital and body. That is a condition, besides, which is preparatory and almost indispensable for the supramentalisation.

23 February 1932

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How can I become master of myself and keep self-discipline?

Observe yourself so that nothing passes without being conscious of it. Do not allow yourself to be moved by the forces of nature without the inner consent. Obey the Mother's will always; let your consent or refusal to the movement of forces be in consonance with her Truth.

10 June 1933

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How can the will be made one with the Mother's Will?

The will can be made one with the Mother's by establishing a constant contact of the consciousness with hers. 24 June 1933

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Does "constant contact of the consciousness" mean mental contact or psychic?

It means the whole — with the psychic as the base.

25 June 1933

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I have been thinking that to change one's nature first one

must restrain one's desire, then one must act according to the Mother's will and gradually there will be no will of one's own any more—all will happen by the Mother's will. Am I right?

At first one must put one's will in unison with the Mother's will knowing that it is an instrument only and that it is the Mother's will behind that alone can give the result. Afterwards, when one becomes conscious fully of the Mother's force working within, then the personal will is replaced by the divine. 15 July 1935

The Mother's Consciousness and the Divine Law

What I seek is the total transformation of myself, so that no movement can be outside the Divine Law.

Establish the Divine Consciousness (the Mother's consciousness) in you and the Divine Law will flow from that. 25 March 1932

Opening to the Mother in Work

Demands should not be made. What you receive freely from the Mother helps you; what you demand or try to impose on her is bound to be empty of her force.

The Mother deals with each person differently according to his true need (not what he himself fancies to be his need) and his progress in the sadhana and his nature.

For you the most effective way to get the strength you need would be to do the work conscientiously and scrupulously, allowing nothing to interfere with its exact discharge. If you did that, opening yourself at the same time to the Mother in your work, you would receive more constantly the grace and would come to feel her power doing the work through you; you would thus be able to live constantly with the sense of her presence. If on the contrary you allow your fancies or desires to interfere with your work or are careless and negligent, you interrupt the flow of her grace and give room for sorrow and uneasiness and other foreign forces to enter into you. Yoga through work is the

easiest and most effective way to enter into the stream of this sadhana.

8 March 1930

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Even the most purely physical and mechanical work cannot be properly done if one accepts incapacity, inertia and passivity. The remedy is not to confine yourself to mechanical work, but to reject and throw off incapacity, passivity and inertia and open yourself to the Mother's force. If vanity, ambition and self-conceit stand in your way, cast them from you. You will not get rid of these things by merely waiting for them to disappear. If you merely wait for things to happen, there is no reason why they should happen at all. If it is incapacity and weakness that oppose, still, as one opens oneself truly and more and more to the Mother's force, the strength and capacity necessary for the work will be given and will grow in the adhar. 11 March 1932

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It is owing to the good psychic condition in which you are that this lightness and power of work comes into you; for then you are open to the Mother's Force and it is that that works in you, so that there is no fatigue. You felt the fatigue formerly *after* the work was over because your vital was open and the vital energy was the instrument of the work, but the body consciousness was not quite open and had some strain. This time the physical seems to have opened also. 1932

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In the ordinary condition of the body if you oblige the body to do too much work, it can do with the support of vital force. But as soon as the work is done, the vital force withdraws and then the body feels fatigue. If this is done too much and for too long a time, there may be a breakdown of health and strength under the overstrain. Rest is then needed for recovery.

If however the mind and the vital get the habit of opening to the Mother's Force, they are then supported by the Force and may even be fully filled with it — the Force does the work

and the body feels no strain or fatigue before or after. But even then, unless the body itself is open and can absorb and keep the Force, sufficient rest in between the work is absolutely necessary. Otherwise although the body may go on for a very long time, yet in the end there can be a danger of a collapse.

The body can be sustained for a long time when there is the full influence and there is a single-minded faith and call in the mind and the vital; but if the mind or the vital is disturbed by other influences or opens itself to forces which are not the Mother's, then there will be a mixed condition and there will be sometimes strength, sometimes fatigue, exhaustion or illness or a mixture of the two at the same time.

Finally, if not only the mind and the vital, but the body also is open and can absorb the Force, it can do extraordinary things in the way of work without breaking down. Still, even then rest is necessary. That is why we insist on those who have the impulse of work keeping a proper balance between rest and labour.

A complete freedom from fatigue is possible, but that comes only when there is a complete transformation of the law of the body by the full descent of a supramental Force into the earth-nature.

Remembering the Mother in Work

It is only by an inner development that you can remember in the midst of work. Meanwhile offer all your work inwardly to the Mother.

21 May 1933

*

How to remember the Mother during work? I have tried to follow a mental rule, without success. Perhaps it is the inner consciousness that remembers while the outer is busy?

One starts by a mental effort — afterwards it is an inner consciousness that is formed which need not be always *thinking* of the Mother because it is always conscious of her. 31 May 1933

*

During mental activities my outer being never remembers the Mother. Please show me the way to remain conscious of her in the midst of intellectual pursuits.

It can be done when you become the witness detached from the mental actions and not involved in them, not absorbed in them as the mental doer or thinker.

20 March 1934

*

Since yesterday I have always been in touch with the Mother during work. Not only do I remember her but the connection with her remains during work. Her Force constantly flows into the Adhar and the work is done automatically, but swiftly, perfectly, unhesitatingly — without personal anxieties and responsibilities; instead, there is confidence, sureness, strength, calmness. I feel that if I can do work in this attitude, it will be perfect, flawless, the work of the Mother's child, not of an egoistic man. Kindly let me know if I am correct.

Yes, it is a very good progress and the first step towards the right use of the Power for action.

1 April 1935

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The little experience I have of sadhana through works makes me incline to the view that work as sadhana is the most difficult of all. I don't remember any experience got through it nor can I remember that I am doing the Mother's work; whereas in poetry, though I may be unlucky as regards experiences, when one writes a poem one does try to think of her, at least mentally. I can even say that it is only by thinking of her that I can compose the lines.

Many find it easy to think of the Mother when working; but when they read or write, their mind goes off to the thing read or written and they forget everything else. I think that is the case with most. Physical work on the other hand can be done with the most external part of the mind, leaving the rest free to remember or to experience.

10 January 1936

Offering Actions to the Mother

Whatever work you do, take it as the Mother's and offer it to the Mother.

14 November 1933

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After finishing any activity, even eating and drinking, I make an offering of it to the Mother, saying, "I offer this work done by me to Thee." But now a sense is growing in me that all works are done by the Mother's Power of Nature through the individual nature. Accordingly, can I substitute the wording in this way, "All the work that is done by the (or my) individual nature is wholeheartedly offered to Thee"? Or what to say?

All that is done in me by Nature, I offer wholeheartedly for transformation to Thee, O Mother.

5 March 1934

*

I have read in many places that we should refer all our actions to the Mother. But I don't know how to refer them and get her answer as to whether the actions should be done or not.

There is no question of getting an answer. It is simply to offer the actions to the Mother and call her Force to guide or do what is necessary.

13 January 1936

Work for the Mother and the Worker's Ego

Is it always necessary for our work to be prompted or initiated by the Mother in an outward way? Could one not feel so intensely that a thing has to be done that it is almost an inner prompting?

It would be dangerous to take every "inner prompting" as if it were a prompting or initiation of action from the Mother. What seems an inner prompting may come from anywhere, any Force good or bad seeking to fulfil itself.

One may have ego about the work even if the work itself comes from the Mother. The ego of the instrument is one of the things against which there must be special care in the Yoga.

When one is doing the work, usually the urge of the force that works and the preoccupation of doing it and getting it done or the pleasure of doing it are sufficient and the mind does not think of anything else. Afterwards the sense of "I did it" comes up. With some however the ego is active during the work itself.

3 November 1935

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In order to separate the being from the constant interference of the ego, I propose to do only those actions that I feel are one with the Mother's will. I know that the ego will still present itself, but it will be easy to recognise its interference as something coming from outside.

Of course it is a way. But one has still to be careful about the ego. Even people who sincerely think they are doing only the Mother's will are yet actuated by ego without knowing it.

4 April 1936

The Mother's Lights

Lights and the Mother

Yesterday when the Mother came down in the evening to give Darshan, I saw her face shining with crimson light like the sun when it rises in the morning. What is the meaning of crimson light?

Crimson light indicates the manifestation of love in the material atmosphere.

5 July 1933

*

When I write to the Mother I often see flashes of light which are tiny, round and of different colours — white, gold, green, blue and yellow. What are they?

When you write, you put yourself probably in contact with the Mother's forces — these lights of different colours are the play of her forces.

14 October 1933

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Looking at the Mother on the terrace in the evening, I saw a dark blue light around her like the colour of the flower named "Radha's consciousness". Is the light around her of different colours? For I have also seen white light around her many times, and sometimes a pretty pale blue light.

There are various lights around the Mother indicating the forces that come from her. White is her own characteristic light, the pale blue is mine, — the golden, dark blue and others correspond to various other forces.

26 October 1933

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We normally see your force working in us as a pale blue light and the Mother's force working as a white light. But today

I saw a red-coloured force working in me, red like a lotus flower. Was this your force too?

It must have been a special force working. The blue light is the characteristic force as the white is of the Mother, but we are not limited to that, the other forces and therefore the other lights are also ours.

24 November 1933

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Today I saw emerging from the Mother the whitish blue light of Sri Aurobindo. Why did I see it so? Is it because both are the same?

All the lights are put out by the Mother from herself.

6 March 1934

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Today at Pranam while feeling the Mother's Powers pouring into me, I saw the sacred word Mā [Mā] inscribed in dark blue light in the corner of my breast below the right shoulder. Does it have any significance?

It means the impression of the Name with its power in some part of the being — (vital mental).

9 April 1934

*

The lights are the Mother's Powers — many in number. The white light is her own characteristic power, that of the Divine Consciousness in its essence.

15 July 1934

The Mother's White Light

Last night I got contact with the Light and prayed for its descent. But it got lost as soon as my mind began to get into a white peaceful Mother's consciousness.

That was quite right. The contact with the Light must create peace.

I felt myself in a mind all white, but each time I tried it was impossible to get a rapid downward pull of the Light. After that I got into feelings and nice sensations in the body, but they took me down to a low state.

(1) The Mother's consciousness (white) is not only peace, but Light and Power.

(2) When one gets into contact with the Light above the mind, the first result should be peace in the mind.

(3) Whatever Power of the Light descends should descend into the peace of the mind without disturbing it.

(4) If you pull down the Light into an active mind, then the action of the Light may get deformed and may be used by the mind in a wrong way, with confusion and disturbance or for purposes and movements that are those of an inferior consciousness and not those of the Truth.

(5) There cannot be any real incompatibility between the Mother's consciousness and contact with the Light above.

2 June 1932

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What is the colour of the light around the Mother?

The Mother's special colour is white, but all the other colours are hers also.

7 June 1933

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In the evening when the Mother came out, I saw a huge white light following behind her. At first I thought it was an illusion, but when I kept on looking at it I knew it was no illusion. I was full of joy.

The white light is the Mother's light and it is always around her.

22 August 1933

*

Today at Pranam I saw a pale blue light around the Mother. Is pale blue the colour of her light?

The pale blue light is my light — white light is the Mother's (sometimes gold also). People generally see either the white or both the white and the pale blue around her. 4 September 1933

*

When the Mother comes on the terrace in the evening, I often see white light around her; it is clearly visible around her body and sometimes the top of the whole building seems to emit light. One day I thought that there may be a background of light behind all material things which can be seen physically. Is it true? Is there any systematic process to open oneself to that physical vision?

The white Light around the Mother is the Mother's own light — that of the Divine Consciousness. Many nowadays are able to see it around her when she is on the roof. One can also see all objects in this light — it means that the light has descended here and is floating around everything. 10 September 1933

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Last night after eight o'clock after returning from work, I sat for meditation. My mind and vital became quiet and opened to the Mother. My heart became vast and opened to her. Then in this quietness something very soothing descended from my chest down to my navel and below it. Then, below the navel, I saw a bright white light penetrating and it filled the whole area with light; then it rose up above the navel till even the head was filled with light. I am unable to express the peace and quietness I felt at that time. The peace was very pure. Now whenever I sit for meditation, I see a very white light coming around me.

The white Light is the Mother's light. Wherever it descends or enters, it brings peace, purity, silence and the openness to the higher forces. If it comes below the navel, that means that it is working in the lower vital. 31 July 1934

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The Mother's white light is the light of the Divine Consciousness; you are living more and more under it and it is that that is liberating you.

25 August 1934

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What you saw in vision was a supraphysical body of the Mother made probably of her white light which is the light of the Divine Consciousness and Force that stands behind the universe.

30 January 1935

*

I am sending you a letter received from X. She has written her experiences and wants to know their meaning. She says that now she concentrates in the heart. Formerly she felt it was dark, but now, concentrating on the Mother and Sri Aurobindo for a long time, she sees a white ray in which their bodies become more brilliant.

The important experience is that of the white ray in the heart — for that is a ray of the Mother's light, the white light, and the illumining of the heart by this light is a thing of great power for this sadhana. The intuitions she speaks of are a sign of the inner consciousness growing in her — the consciousness which is necessary for Yoga.

28 July 1937

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It [*the Mother's light*] is always there in the inner Purusha.

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That means the light of the divine consciousness (the Mother's Consciousness, white light) in the vital. Blue is the higher mind, gold the divine Truth. So it is the vital with the light of the higher mind and the divine Truth in it emanating the Mother's light.

The Mother's Diamond Light

(a) It [*the diamond light*] means the essential Force of the Mother.

(b) The diamond light proceeds from the heart of the Divine Consciousness and it brings the opening of the Divine Consciousness wherever it goes.

(c) The Mother's descent with the diamond light is the sanction of the Supreme Power to the movement in you.

(d) The Mother's diamond light is a light of absolute purity and power.

(e) The diamond light is the central consciousness and force of the Divine.

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The Mother's light is white — especially diamond white. The Mahakali form is usually golden, of a very bright and strong golden hue.

12 October 1935

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The diamond is the symbol of the intensest light of the Mother's consciousness, so your visions indicate that you saw her full of that light and radiating it. Other jewels must be symbols of other forces, the ruby indicating power in the physical.

23 February 1936

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The diamond is the symbol of the Mother's consciousness; the colour depends on the particular force which her consciousness puts forth upon you at the moment.

14 April 1936

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The diamond is the symbol of the Mother's light and energy — the diamond light is that of her consciousness at its most intense.

13 November 1936

The Golden Light of Mahakali

Today at Pranam I saw a light like a golden thread coming from the Mother to me, but it vanished in a short time. Once I saw this light very clearly when she was standing on the

terrace, just before coming down the staircase. Is this light from inside or outside? Since I saw it only for a while, I cannot believe my own eyes.

The golden Light is the light of the Divine Truth on the higher planes above the ordinary mind — a light supramental in origin. It is also the light of Mahakali above the mind. The golden light is also often seen emanating from the Mother like the white Light.

17 September 1933

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The line of golden light is a line of the light of the higher Divine Truth encircling the Akash of the heart and the diamond mass is the Mother's light pressing into that Akash. It is therefore a sign of these powers working on the psychic-emotional centre.

17 December 1936

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One night I found a vast light, yellowish white, cool and peaceful, coming down from above. Is this the light of the higher mind consciousness or of some spiritual consciousness?

It depends on the shade of the yellow. If it is golden white it comes from above the mind and the combination suggests the Maheshwari-Mahakali power. Higher Mind colour is pale blue.

21 March 1938

Seeing Light around the Mother

Sometimes I see an outline of white light around Mother. Is it that truly I can see Mother's Light?

Of course you can see it. Nowadays it is visible to many.

2 July 1933

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Last evening when the Mother was walking on the terrace I saw a light on her body. What was it?

Many see light around the Mother. The light is there always.

26 July 1933

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Today as soon as the Mother took her seat in the Pranam Hall
I saw that white light was playing both on her left and right
sides. Was there any particular reason why I saw like this?

No. One can always see white Light around the Mother, for it
is her light, always there.

8 August 1933

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This evening when the Mother came to give us darshan, I
saw Sri Aurobindo's light around her like a cloud. Was this a
formation of the mind or the vital? Was there a mistake in it?

If seeing the Mother's Light is a mistake or a mental or vital
formation, then the realisation of the Divine and all spiritual
experience can be questioned as a mental or vital formation or
mistake and all Yoga becomes impossible.

6 September 1933

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While watching the Mother walk on the terrace, I saw a light
like moonlight around her. How strong and bright it was.
Seeing it, my being became quiet and gradually settled into a
deep indrawn condition.

People see all kinds of lights around the Mother when she walks
on the roof. They are all the flowing out of different forces. If it
was like the moonlight in appearance it would be the spiritual
force.

1 November 1933

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What people see around the Mother is first her aura, as it is
called nowadays, and secondly the forces of Light that pour out
from her when she concentrates, as she always does on the roof
for instance. (Everybody has an aura — but in most it is weak
and not very luminous, in the Mother's aura there is the full play

of lights and powers.) People do not see it usually because it is a subtle physical and not a gross material phenomenon. They can see only on two conditions, first if they develop sufficient subtle sight, secondly if the aura itself begins to become so strong that it affects the sheath of gross matter which conceals it. The Mother has certainly no idea of making people see it—it is of themselves that one after another, some 20 or 30 in the Asram, I believe, have come to see. None of them are big Yogis, some of them are mere beginners. It is certainly one of the signs that the higher Force (call it supramental or not) is beginning to influence Matter.

15 November 1933

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Some people see light etc. around the Mother but I am not able to do so. What is the obstruction in me?

It is not an obstruction—it is simply a question of the growth of the inner senses. It has no indispensable connection with spiritual progress. There are some very far on the path who have very little of this kind of vision if any—on the other hand sometimes it develops enormously in mere beginners who have as yet had only very elementary spiritual experiences.

1 December 1933

*

X says that she sees white light streaming out from the Mother when she sees her walking on the terrace. And some days, when the Mother is meditating, she sees some figure behind her.

There is always light around the Mother which the eyes can see if the inner vision opens. There are also many beings that are around her.

4 September 1934

The Mother in Visions, Dreams and Experiences

Seeing the Mother in Visions and Dreams

Recently I notice that before the Mother comes down from the terrace in the evening she stands there for a long time. I feel that at that time she gives us something specially, so I concentrate to receive and feel what she gives. But this evening suddenly I saw (while looking at her) that her physical body disappeared — there was no sign of her body, as if she were not there! Then after a few seconds her figure reappeared. I felt at that moment that she mixed with the ether and became one with all things. Why did I see like this?

The Mother makes an invocation or aspiration and stands till the movement is over. Yesterday she passed for some time beyond the sense of the body and it is perhaps this that made you see in that way.

29 August 1932

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The day before yesterday I saw in a dream: The Mother is standing in a high place; before her there is a pillar with the Tulsi plant on it. What does it signify?

That she has brought down and planted Bhakti, I suppose.

Today while meditating in the Pranam hall before the Mother came down, I saw: From a high place the Mother is coming down in us, wearing a rosy coloured sari and having a “Divine Love” flower in her hair. What does this signify?

It is a symbol of the descent of Divine Love.

5 June 1933

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I saw Mother’s form in a dream last night. Was it real or merely an imagination?

What do you mean by real? It was the form of Mother in a dream experience. Imagination applies only to the waking mind.

3 July 1933

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When I asked whether the form of the Mother in my dream was real or not, I meant: Was it the Mother herself or was it some false forces taking the form of the Mother?

If false forces take the form of the Mother, it will be with some bad object. If there is no attack or wrong suggestion, you need not suppose that it is false forces that have done it.

Of course it is always possible that something in your own consciousness has constructed a dream about the Mother or put her figure there when she herself was not there. That happens when it is only a dream, a number of ideas and memories etc. of the mind put together and not an experience on another plane.

5 July 1933

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Today while meditating in the Pranam hall before the Mother came down, I saw in meditation: "The Mother is absorbed in deep concentration." Why did I see her like that?

The Mother is always in a concentrated consciousness in her inner being — so it is quite natural that you should see like that.

5 July 1933

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About the dream of which I wrote yesterday, you have written, "It has a reality and a significance", but you have not written the significance. Will it be wrong if I ask it? The dream in short was that I saw the Mother standing on a high place, as if on a terrace. At first I could not see her because it was dark, but afterwards she held up a torch directing its rays to her face so I could see her smiling. Then the focus of the light was thrown by her on my face and what happened afterwards I did not remember.

The significance is plain — it refers to the difficulty in seeing

the Mother within you because of the darkness in Nature and the Mother herself holds the light first so that you can see her and then so that the light can fall on you—a symbol of self-knowledge. It is a sort of promise for the sadhana.

13 July 1933

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The day before yesterday, just before the Mother came down for her evening walk, I saw: The fire of aspiration is rising from my heart and its flame is slowly going upward as I constantly remember the Mother. Then I saw: The Mother, as we see her every day, is descending in the fire and filling my mind, vital and physical with peace and strength. In the second vision why did I see the Mother's image exactly as we see her every day?

It indicates an aspiration and an action for realisation in the external nature and not only in the inner being. When it is an inner action or action of another plane one can see the Mother in any of her forms, but for realisation in the physical her appropriate form is that which she wears here.

15 July 1933

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Two days back I saw in a dream that I was lying in a bed in a room and the Mother entered with a big rosy coloured horse. Seeing the horse I told the Mother: "Mother, the horse is mad; he will bite me." The Mother told me: "No, the horse is not mad; he will not bite you." What is the meaning of this dream?

Rose is the colour of psychic love—the horse is dynamic power. So the rosy coloured horse means that the Mother was bringing with her the dynamic power of psychic love.

3 August 1933

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Today while meditating in the Pranam hall I saw: The sky is filled with blue light. From the sky a long path is coming down on earth. The path is beautifully paved. On this path the Mother is slowly and joyfully coming towards the earth. Her whole body is white and full of golden light and this light

is spreading out on all sides. When the Mother has come to the end of the path, her body will get mixed with the soil of the earth. Then I suddenly woke up from meditation. Was this a vision? What plane was it from?

Yes, it is a vision from the plane of mind (not ordinary, but higher mind). It indicates the descent of the Mother with her light of purity and Truth (white and golden) into Matter.

5 August 1933

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This afternoon in a dream I rose up very high and entered a beautiful temple shining with bright white light. In that temple I felt the pressure of the divine consciousness. The Mother and I and others were there. Then at the temple gate I saw red pieces of paper; on each piece was written the name "Mira". Then X called me and brought me down to Y's room to learn a new song. After that, I again went up to the temple by a staircase, but it was a difficult climb. Inside the temple there was the full power of the divine consciousness. What is the meaning of my dream?

The temple is the Mother's consciousness into which you enter by sadhana (as in your other experience described today you entered into the world of the Mother's consciousness and saw things from there) and you come out of it when you turn to something outward but can ascend again at will once you have been there.

16 September 1933

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I have heard that the colour of Kali is black and she has four hands. But I saw her with only two hands and her colour was bright white. Why did I see her like this?

The black Kali form is a manifestation on the vital plane of Mahakali—but Mahakali herself in the Overmind is golden. What you saw was the Mother herself in her body of light with the Mahakali power in her, but not the actual form of Mahakali.

26 September 1933

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Last night I saw in a dream that Light from the Mother's body was coming down into my body and transforming it.

Good — it is the opening of the physical consciousness to the Mother.

30 September 1933

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The bodies I wrote about this morning were like shadowy pictures, not distinct, and seemed to be like stones, not white in colour but black. Why was that?

It was probably the subconscious physical that you saw — that would explain the shadowy character; the stone indicates the material Nature.

30 September 1933

*

In the afternoon I went to sleep remembering the Mother. After a while I saw that my subtle mind, vital and body had risen up high into a beautiful world, profound and peaceful. Then I saw many saints, sages and Gods tirelessly calling the Mother in their meditations. The joy of that world was truly deep. What a beautiful world! Then I saw the Mother slowly descend into their midst; she had ten arms and a bright white complexion. Suddenly I woke up. But lying quietly on the bed, I realised that my outer mind, life and body were moving inside the Mother's circle. In this condition I looked at my body and saw that my gross body had a beautiful golden colour. All this time I kept calling the Mother quietly. Is all this true?

You seem to have ascended into a plane of the Higher Spiritualised Mind with a descent into it of Maheshwari bringing the power of the Divine Truth. The result in the physical consciousness was a perception of the One Consciousness and Life in all things and an illumination of the cells of the body with the golden light of the higher Truth.

October 1933

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While looking at the Mother when she came on the terrace, I suddenly saw in her lap a baby whom I took to be Jesus Christ

as it resembled his figure. The vision lasted for about a minute and I saw it with open eyes.

It may be so — as Jesus was a child of the Divine Mother.

25 November 1933

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I saw the Mother in the colour of the flower we call “Detachment”. Does it have any meaning?

It must mean that that was the force which she was offering to you or else which you needed from her.

10 January 1934

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Could a vision of the Mother or seeing her in dream or in waking be called a realisation?

That would be an experience rather than a realisation. A realisation would be of the Mother’s presence within, her force doing the work — or of the Peace or Silence everywhere, of universal Love, universal Beauty or Ananda etc. etc. Visions come under the head of experiences, unless they fix themselves and are accompanied by a realisation of which they are as it were the support — e.g. the vision of the Mother always in the heart or above the head etc.

12 March 1934

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Watching the Mother while she was meditating on the terrace, I saw a white light coming down from the sky and passing through the crown of her head. The light was not bright white, but a little blue, like the colour of the flower “Krishna’s Ananda”.

The lights represent forces — I suppose you saw some force of Ananda coming down.

2 April 1934

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Today while offering flowers to the Mother, I concentrated with my eyes shut. I saw the Mother’s bright white form amidst a beautiful dazzling light whose colour I cannot describe.

It was the psychic light, I suppose, and the Mother in it.

6 April 1934

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During my noon nap, I was in the Mother's lap. She put her transforming palm on my head. With her thumb she was pressing the Brahmic centre at the top of my head and opening it; I felt that something was being received from there. Then suddenly there was a shift of the consciousness into some world other than the terrestrial. A supraphysical light was experienced in the cells of the body, which was already flooded with the light. The physical itself was taken up. Can this experience be explained?

There is nothing to explain. It was what you describe. At once the raising of the consciousness to a higher plane and the descent of that into the physical.

5 September 1934

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X told us today that on the Puja day the Mother was trying to bring down the personality of Durga.

There was no trying — it came down.

When I came for Pranam, the Mother's grandeur and magnificent appearance made me feel that she was Durga herself. I don't know whether such a feeling arose out of the association with the Puja on that day, or quite independently of it. But one cannot take such feelings seriously (perhaps you will rebuke me for saying that) . . .

All that is the silliness of the physical mind which thinks itself very clever in explaining away the inner feeling or perception.

because these feelings are so vague, abstract and momentary!

What else do you expect the first touches to be?

It is difficult to distinguish the borderline between imagination, intuition and feelings unless they are substantiated by

something like a concrete vision. To give you one instance: I heard as if the Goddess Bhagawati were telling me, "I am coming" and many other things which I don't remember now.

These things are at least a proof that the inner mind and vital are trying to open to supraphysical things. But if you belittle it at once the moment it starts how can it ever develop?

26 October 1934

*

I had a dream in which the Mother seemed to be ill. Once when she smiled, I imagined that I saw all the worlds in her mouth, as Yashoda saw them in Krishna's mouth. Immediately after this, I felt myself being lifted up above the world and looking at it as a witness. But the sense of the Mother being ill made me wonder if it was really her or someone else — some other influence.

I don't think it was another influence. It reads like a very genuine experience.

19 June 1935

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The other day while I was having a nap in the afternoon, I had a vision of a very beautiful woman (pardon me, more than a woman) sitting under the sun. The rays of the sun were either surrounding her or were emanating from her body — I can't precisely say which. The appearance and dress seemed to be European.

It is not a woman. A woman does not radiate and is not surrounded by rays either. Probably a Sun Goddess or a Shakti of the inner Light, one of the Mother's Powers.

20 December 1935

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Just yesterday you wrote to me, "The next step is to be conscious in the samadhi" and today it actually took place. A great Holy Woman had come. Several of us went for her darshan. When my turn came, without looking at her face, I threw myself on her lap. She put her hands on my head, caressed me slowly, and gave me two spiritual powers. After a while,

I raised my head and looked at the Holy Woman. Her face appeared like the Mother's. Then I said, "May I ask you a question?" She did not seem to like this, but as she had not refused, I repeated the question. She said, "No, I don't like questions." Then we entered into a trance together. After a long time we both came back to consciousness.

This whole thing is beyond my understanding. Please tell me: (1) Who was the Holy Woman? (2) Why did she grant me the gift of higher powers? (3) A trance within a trance?

Obviously the Holy Woman was the Mother herself in a supra-physical form. It was natural that she should not like questions — the Mother does not like mental questions very much at any time and least of all when she is giving meditation as she was doing in this experience. It is rather funny to ask "why" (your eternal why) higher powers should be given. People do not question the gifts of the Shakti or demand reasons for her giving them, they are only too glad to get them. Trance within trance of course, since your sadhana was going on in the trance, according to the ways of trance. It is also in this way that it can go on in conscious sleep.

10 June 1936

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Some months ago in a vision, I offered the Mother three flowers of "Divine Love". Has this any meaning for my sadhana?

It is not quite clear what this number 3 means in this connection. Possibly it is the aspiration for the Divine's love in the three parts of the being.

12 July 1936

*

The lotus you saw above the Mother's head was the highest centre of the embodied consciousness (where it communicates with the higher Truth) fully open with the golden light of the divine Truth pouring upon it and filling it. It is that full opening which the Mother was bringing down and which has to happen eventually in the sadhak.

23 July 1936

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Once in a vision I saw the Mother in the physical dressed in a red sari. What does it mean?

Simply the presence of the Mother in the physical consciousness. Red is the colour of the physical.

September 1936

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I see a rough rock. Sunlight falls upon it and the rock changes: in the centre a hollow circle is made and rocks arrange themselves round the circle. In the centre of the circle appears a stone image of Shiva nearly two feet high. Afterwards, out of this image the Mother emerges. She is in meditation. The sunlight falls just behind the Mother's body. What does it signify?

Rocks = the physical (most material) being.

An opening in the material making room for the formation of the spiritual consciousness there.

Stone image of Shiva = the realisation of the silent Self or Brahman there (peace, silence, wideness of the Infinite, purity of the witness Purusha).

Out of this silence emerges the Divine Shakti concentrated for the transformation of the material.

Sunlight = Light of Truth.

12 October 1936

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Whenever I have seen snakes in dream or anywhere else, I have had to go through many difficulties, so I have always believed that seeing snakes is not very auspicious. Is this true?

Serpents are energies — those of the vital are usually evil forces and it is these that are usually seen by people. But favourable or divine forces are also imaged in that form — e.g., the Kundalini Shakti is imaged in the form of a serpent. Serpents turning over or round the Mother's head would rather recall the Shivamurti and would mean numberless energies all finally gathered up into one infinite energy of which they are the aspects.

28 October 1936

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Once I saw the Mother sitting on the peak of an icy mountain; a narrow path led there and I was gradually advancing towards that.

This is simply a symbol of the purity and silence of the higher consciousness which has to be reached by the path of sadhana. The narrowness symbolises the difficulty because one has not to slip to one side or the other, but go straight. 7 December 1936

*

I saw the Mother sitting on her seat. There was a cobra behind her with many hoods covering the Mother's head. The cobra was a shining golden colour with a shining red round spot in the centre of each hood. What did it signify?

The cobra is an emblem of Nature-Energy — golden = the higher Truth-Nature — many hoods = many powers. Red is probably a sign of Mahakali power. The cobra covering the head with its hoods is a symbol of sovereignty. 23 January 1937

*

Two years before I came here I had a vision one night: High above in the sky I saw two dark blue feet. So far as I remember they were adorned only with anklets. The soles were the colour of the red lotus. I concluded they were the Mother's lotus feet because that is how I felt and immediately saw a spotted cloth that is used in India in the Mother's worship descending from Her right side. Who could be this Mother?

There is here a general symbolism in the details of the figure, but it is clearly the same experience [*as in the next two visions*] at its first stage in the first contact.

The same night or the next, I had another vision. In front of me I saw a pure white staircase; it went up for countless steps until the top of it got lost in the sky. A white figure in a pure white gown (European style) rapidly descended the upper part of the stairs and, taking her stand on the staircase, opened her arms to me. Who was this Mother?

Here and in the next it is obviously the Mother here. The staircase is a very usual symbol seen by many and it meant the acceptance and call to the ascent.

A third experience I had when I came here for the first time. One night I heard something descending with a revolving motion above my head. No sooner did I hear the sound than I saw a smaller image of the above white Lady entering into me from above and stopping somewhere in the heart region. Who is this Power and Personality? How is she related to the second, the second to the first and all the three to you? How can I be true to her and to you?

By self-opening and an increasing self-giving to the Divine.

All these are visions of the Mother and it agrees with what she felt when she first saw you.

22 March 1938

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Yesterday night in a dream I was in a garden — it was night perhaps; there was not much light. I was there with some other sadhaks and we were there to meditate with the Mother. I could not see Mother but I knew she was there, high up, waiting to give us meditation. But some of the sadhaks were careless, some were yawning, some were lying down. I was trying to meditate and I felt Mother's hand come down and touch my forehead for about a minute. Then I felt something in me being drawn up through my whole body as she slowly drew her hand back, and I felt something being taken away. But when I woke up, I did not know if it was a good or bad thing Mother took away. What was it?

It was certainly a true dream of the lower vital or perhaps subtle physical plane, where the laziness, indifference, frivolity of the sadhaks is a fact and the chief obstacle to the supramental descent into Matter. Because in your inner physical you were sincere and aspiring, the Mother's blessing came upon you and removed something there that was in the way. There is no indication in the dream as to what it was, but something in the lower vital or physical connected with this general defect.

Developing the Ability to See the Mother

Mother said she would try to make you see her because it is not always easy for people to see her even when she is near them. It is also easier to see with eyes shut than with eyes open — though this too is possible — because it is a sight within you that has to open in order to see her. It is not necessary to call her for any fixed number of hours. It is enough if you love her always, remember her often, sit every day a little time before her photograph and call her.

You must never doubt that Mother loves you and you need never weep for that, for her feelings towards you cannot and will not change.

Of course you can take the photographs given to you by the Mother and keep them with you there. 7 May 1935

It is not that because the Mother loves you she can show herself to your physical eyes at a distance. The physical eyes of men are not made so as to see in that way. It becomes possible only after long sadhana. First one sees with the eyes closed, because that is easier. When one is accustomed to see with the eyes closed, then afterwards it becomes more possible to see with the eyes open. So you should not be too eager to see at once in the more difficult way. It will come in the end, if you want it, but it does not come at once. Don't mind if it takes time. You must grow first more and more able to feel the Mother near you; that you can do by thinking of her and calling her often. Then seeing will be more easy.

8 May 1935

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Do not mind about the time that it will take — one can't fix the time of these things beforehand. When you feel the Mother's presence more and more, when you begin to see her with the inner sight, then it can come.

It is better not to speak of the Mother to your friends—they do not know her, therefore they can take no interest in her.

The more you live close to the Mother in yourself, the less you will need to speak of her to others.

9 May 1935

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To see you must be more quiet within — then after a little the sight begins to come. An inner sight opens, one begins to see what the outward senses cannot see — and it is then possible to see the Mother there.

Experiences of the Mother and Her Powers

In the morning I was feeling that the mind is quite empty. In the afternoon I saw an intense compact golden light there in front, at some distance outside the mind.

The golden light is the promise of the higher knowledge. For the coming of that knowledge the silence of the frontal exterior mind is necessary.

Today I felt that a part of the mind is or can be always open to the higher light, but realisation has to depend on what comes from below and accordingly change in its character and intensity. Remaining for some time in this condition is like seeing the Divine, now apparent in so many things and movements. I understood how it is to be done, but a long time is necessary in order to be established in this consciousness which has no end. Rising higher also becomes a part of this movement. I feel that all will be done, only time is needed for fixing the new consciousness.

Very good.

All that you write on this page is entirely sound and accurate; it shows that you are getting the *true* knowledge. Most in fact of the day's experiences are signs of the true consciousness coming. The Mother's consciousness with the wideness of the light, the white light in the vital, the golden light in the silence of the outer mind, the change in the vital, the quiet and natural trust and confidence are all signs and circumstances of this opening to the true consciousness. As you say, there must be established

the fixing of this consciousness. The constant openness of part of the mind to the higher light will bring the silence of the whole mind and it is in the silent mind that the true knowledge will come—and indeed it has begun already to come. The change you note in the vital must also continue.

26 March 1930

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I remember that formerly at night I became conscious of the mind rising upward and then I saw many points all around rising up with aspiration, as if each point was aspiring in a different light that was guided by the Mother. Nowadays I think that if there is one aspiration, there will be constant contact.

Yes—one aspiration to live in the Mother's light and force which bring the true knowledge and the true power. If that aspiration is fulfilled, then all else needed can be fulfilled—all the other lights can be contained in the Divine Light.

17 February 1931

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Today in meditation my entire body opened and spread out infinitely. I felt a slight uneasiness at first, but I could feel the Mother's force. It carried me deeper and deeper into dense darkness through immense worlds of disgust and depression. Though I felt no peace and joy on this long journey, I continued to walk steadily and swiftly. Someone seemed to say, "Do not be depressed. Walk on, proceed. You have to cross through still darker worlds of disgust and depression, but keep on going." Along with this experience, I felt a great force. My heart opened wide; peace and profound contentment descended into it and I saw white light playing everywhere. Crossing another dark world, I saw a vibrant golden light. How powerful and beautiful that golden light was! My body, mind and heart were satisfied. I felt a sense of fearlessness. A sadhak's life is like the life of a warrior. However long the struggle, whatever the obstacles, we will ascend to the Supreme Truth. Is this the right way to observe my problems and difficulties?

Yes, that is the attitude you have to keep. If it is kept, then

there will be no disturbance or only a superficial unease. The experience itself was that of the descent of the Mother's light of Divine Consciousness into domains of being which are ignorant or inconscient and obscure. The Mother herself has descended into these domains and moved through them to bring light there.

10 September 1933

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This morning during my meditation before the Mother, a very tender feeling rose from within me. She was sitting before us with an ocean of compassion and love which she wants to give away unconditionally and without reserve. But we cannot receive it; and instead of reproaching ourselves for our inability, we put the blame on the Mother, pouring our venom on her which she swallows and offers back to us as Amrita in return.

This experience brought me a mixed feeling of peaceful silence, self-reproach and a touch of sadness. It has remained with me all day, but now I apprehend a reaction; for usually my experiences recede, leaving me with depression or emptiness.

What you felt was an opening of the psychic being in your heart and the perceptions that came to you were perfectly true. The reaction you speak of does often come after an experience. But if the depression can be avoided, emptiness does not matter. Up to a certain stage the nature needs after an experience a quiescent period to assimilate experience. One has then not to be depressed but to remain quiet waiting and aspiring for more experience, more opening, a more continuous flow of the truth.

5 September 1934

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Yesterday the whole day I felt an opening far above the head and there the individual Mother became wide and active. I felt the play of various ideas and forces and I felt her assurance that she would manifest in me. But also the intensity led to nervous disturbances. The pressure in my head-nerves was almost unbearable, and even today some disturbance in the physical is there. Is it due to some mistake I have made?

The Mother “manifesting” in you is an ambiguous expression — it is the Mother’s consciousness, the higher consciousness with the light, strength that has to come down in each sadhak, with the Mother’s presence always there. Along with this experience there must have been an attempt at surrender or an initial answer in the lower vital, but as a reaction the nervous disturbance came back — the old lower vital nature not being ready to give up possession reasserted its disturbances which were about to abate.

6 November 1934

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Sometimes when I sit in meditation, I find that instead of myself, the Mother is sitting. Even my body seems to be that. Pray let me know what it means.

Probably you became aware of some part of your being which feels united with the Mother.

24 August 1935

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From the morning I was feeling an intense aspiration to get lost in the Mother’s consciousness. Then I felt my consciousness frequently rising and stationing itself above. Before Pranam I felt as if even the parts near the navel and below were being drawn upwards. After Pranam I experienced for some time a different kind of atmosphere almost concretely around me, so I imagined that the Mother may have put a strong spiritual influence on my subconscious and environmental consciousness.

It is very good. You are right about the subconscious and environmental, — for it is there that the influence must fall so that the consciousness may go upward and spread itself out widely in a free peace, light and joy connecting them down to the subconscious with the higher consciousness. It is then that the loss of the ego in the Mother’s consciousness becomes possible.

25 September 1935

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Over my head I see a plane of infinite and eternal Peace. The Mother is the Queen of this plane. From there I feel a ceaseless

flow coming down towards me. It first touches the higher being and then the lower parts. When they are prepared, the Peace or silence descends like a current of water which passes through the Brahmic hole.

That is quite correct. In many however it descends in a mass through the whole head and not in a current through the Brahmic hole.

13 February 1936

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The experience of a concrete presence of the Mother in the photograph and the immediate effect on the health are things of the subtle physical acting on the physical mind and body — such things can happen only when the physical consciousness has begun to open — that is why I said it was a sign. Of course the full effects of the spiritual experiences can only come when the whole consciousness is entirely open and receives and responds to them. The presence of the Mother in all can be felt when one begins to have the widening of the consciousness in which it is not shut up in the personal self and the body but is extended everywhere. That comes usually with the descent of the higher consciousness from above. But one can also feel a beginning of it through the opening of the psychic. Then of course anger and jealousy do not remain — they fall away from the sense of spiritual oneness.

3 May 1936

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X told me that she was in constant touch with the Divine Mother long before she came to Pondicherry. She saw her not only in meditation or vision but before her wide-awake eyes, in a concrete form. She often conversed with her; especially when some difficulty arose, the Mother would come and tell her what to do. If what she says is correct, she must be a very advanced sadhika. How much truth do you find in her experiences and visions?

She has not related them to us. But there is nothing improbable in it. It means simply that she externalised her inner vision and experience so as to see through the physical eyes also, but it was

the inner vision that saw and the inner hearing that heard, not the physical sight or hearing. That is common enough. It does not indicate an “advanced” sadhana, whatever that phrase may mean, but only a special faculty.

I have heard that there are people here who feel the Mother’s presence or open directly to her inner knowledge. But this is not the same as seeing her with the physical eyes or having conversations with her.

These things are extremely common among those who practise Yoga everywhere. In the Asram the sadhaks are too intelligent, sceptical and matter of fact to have much of that kind of experience. Even those who might develop it are repressed by the outward-mindedness and physical-mindedness that dominates the atmosphere.

2 July 1936

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The experience you had in your sleep was that of going into the vital world and meeting there one of the hostile vital beings who wished to menace or attack you, but could not attack you because of your call on the Mother. There are two things that must be acquired in these passages through the vital world — first this immediate call on the Mother’s protection and, second, the throwing away of all fear. To those who do not fear them, these beings or forces can do nothing — in any meeting or conflict with them the Mother’s name is a sure protection even if some fear should come.

The other experience was due to your mind dwelling in the state of the Mother’s constant presence and its results. What you say is true, about these results, but it is not easy for the mind or vital or physical consciousness to get or keep the Mother’s conscious presence — it is only the psychic that keeps it easily. So the thought brought down a pressure from above and a concentration within in the heart with a healing there and a pain of the yearning within followed by its sweetness. This pain is that of the psychic sorrow or perhaps rather of the psycho-vital

sorrow and yearning — for the psychic sorrow itself is usually sweet and not painful.

2 August 1936

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Nowadays I get an inspiration to see all in the Mother and the Mother in all — to see the Vishwarupa in her as Yashoda saw it in Sri Krishna. Will I ever be able to have this vision?

To see all in the Mother and the Mother in all is a necessary experience in the Yoga. There is no reason why it should not happen.

29 April 1937

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Kindly let me know the significance of my frequently coming to the Mother on the vital plane. I suppose the meeting was sometimes on the supraphysical plane. Did my vital come to the Mother for refreshing its energy, for purification, etc.?

This kind of vital coming to the Mother all the sadhaks have in their sleep and dreams, if they are a little conscious there. Even those who are not sadhaks or others who do not know her come, but they are not aware of it. The vital plane is a supraphysical plane — the vital moves about in its own plane and is not limited by the physical mind or its consciousness or experience.

13 July 1937

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Kindly enlighten me as to what is the object and what the result of my coming to the Mother on the vital plane during sleep or dream.

It may be for any object or without any specific object — there is no rule in such matters.

14 July 1937

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This morning I saw within me a flash of golden light and felt the vivid presence of the Mother. I felt myself to be within her. I felt all to be within me and this "me" was something wider than I as a man.

To have that is very important — to get into something wider than the I as a man — into one's own cosmic Self and universal consciousness — in the Mother.

Hearing the Mother's Voice

In the morning at Pranam while putting my head in the Mother's lap, I heard some voice. I felt it to be the Mother's. Did she really speak or was it an illusion?

It may have been that the Mother conveyed something to you.
At this moment she does not remember. 27 April 1933

27 April 1933

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When is one said to be ready to hear the Mother's voice from within?

When one has equality, discrimination and sufficient Yogic experience — otherwise any voice may be mistaken for the Mother's.

Can one rely solely upon the voice from within from the beginning?

If it is the Mother's voice; but you have to be sure of that.

7 July 1933

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Is it true that when one tries to do something which is contrary to the Divine's Will, the Mother tells him inwardly not to do it?

It is the discriminating mind or the psychic that tells.

Is it true that to hear the Mother's voice inwardly and to recognise it as hers is not difficult?

No, to hear and recognise the Mother's voice within is not so easy.

Is one who has gone far on the path able to hear her voice?

There is no rule.

8 July 1933

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In *Bases of Yoga* one reads: "It is with the Mother who is always with you and in you that you converse."¹ Could you tell me briefly how a sadhak converses with the Mother?

One hears the voice or the thought speaking inwardly and one answers inwardly. Only it is not always safe for the sadhak if there is any insincerity of ego, desire, vanity, ambition in him — for then he may construct a voice or thought in his mind and ascribe it to the Mother and it will say to him pleasing and flattering things which mislead him. Or he may mistake some other Voice for the Mother's.

2 July 1936

Visions, Voices and Progress in Sadhana

One who can have faith without visions and voices is much farther on the true inner path than one who needs them to have faith.

Visions and voices are not meant for creating faith; they are effective only if one has faith already.

Visions and voices are often indulged in unnecessarily by people. Sometimes they interpret them wrongly or give them too much value. Thus they nourish their egos. But this capacity is by no means a sign of progress.

What do you mean by progress? The Mother spent many years entering the occult worlds and learning all that was to be learnt there. All that time she was making no progress? She sees things always when she goes into trance. Her capacity is a thing of no value? Because a great number of people don't know how to

¹ See the letter of 7 December 1933 on pages 311–12. That letter was published, in a revised form, in *Bases of Yoga* in 1936. — Ed.

use these faculties or misuse them or give them excessive value or nourish their ego by them, does it follow that the faculties themselves have no Yogic use or value? 8 July 1936

8 July 1936

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When I said, "But this capacity is by no means a sign of progress", I meant that the capacity *by itself* is not a sign of spiritual progress. I forgot to write "*by itself*" and this changed the whole meaning.

Even by itself, it is a progress in the development of the consciousness though it may not carry with it any spiritualisation of the nature. 9 July 1936

9 July 1936

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At a certain stage of the sadhana, everybody receives some occult opening or other: visions, voices, subtle smells or touches. I was told that each occult opening helps one, but none of them has helped me in my practical sadhana.

I do not know what you mean by practical sadhana. If one develops the occult faculty and the occult experience and knowledge, these things can be of great use, therefore practical. In themselves they are a proof of opening of the inner consciousness and also help to open it farther — though they are not indispensable for that.

Those who have the faculty of vision may not use it properly or take full advantage of it. Take X. She claims that the Divine Mother comes to her and tells her how to solve her difficulties. But if the Mother ever tried to interfere with those defects and imperfections, I suppose X would not like it.

I don't suppose she would — the supposition is rather gratuitous and assumes that she is false and insincere. Every sadhak has a good amount of defects and imperfections and the majority of them seem as unable to get rid of them as X. 9 July 1936

The Mother's Help in Difficulties

Difficulties and the Mother's Help

Not to be disturbed, to remain quiet and confident is the right attitude, but it is necessary also to receive the help of the Mother and not to shrink back for any reason from her solicitude. One ought not to indulge ideas of incapacity, inability to respond, dwelling too much on defects and failures and allowing the mind to be in pain and shame on their account; for these ideas and feelings become in the end weakening things. If there are difficulties, stumblings or failures, one has to look at them quietly and call in tranquilly and persistently the divine help for their removal, but not to allow oneself to be upset or pained or discouraged. Yoga is not an easy path and the total change of the nature cannot be done in a day.

27 May 1931

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Throw aside this weakness. The Mother's help is there — keep yourself quiet and calm and face the difficulties with the courage a sadhak must have when seeking the Divine.

22 November 1933

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Once one has entered the path of Yoga, there is only one thing to do, to fix oneself in the resolution to go to the end whatever happens, whatever difficulties arise. None really gets the fulfilment in Yoga by his own capacity — it is by the greater Force that stands over you that it will come — and it is the call, persistent through all vicissitudes, to that Force, by which the fulfilment will come. Even when you cannot aspire actively, keep yourself turned to the Mother for the help to come — that is the one thing to do always.

3 January 1934

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X says that while giving us flowers the Mother always says something to us silently about future difficulties, dangers or falls. Is it so?

Mother never thinks of future difficulties, falls or dangers. Her concentration is always on help and uplift, not on difficulty and downfall.

8 January 1934

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All the Mother's love and help will remain with you unchanged as before. The whole difficulty comes from a vital movement which wants to possess in the wrong way, by comparison with others, instead of living fully in the close relation of your heart and soul with the Mother. It is the same in your relation with X. But this is a defect common in human nature and many here have it. It is not a thing that cannot be removed from the nature. Indeed since your heart and soul want to be free from it, it cannot but go. Do not be discouraged therefore when it returns owing to old habit. With the Mother's love and help what your heart and soul desire will surely come and the wrong obscuring element disappear.

25 September 1935

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Is it true that the nearer the descent of the Supermind the greater will be the difficulties of those in whom it is to come down?

It is true, unless they are so surrendered to the Mother, so psychic, plastic, free from ego that the difficulties are spared to them.

4 October 1935

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You must not yield to impatience and let it bring thoughts of the old kind that cannot possibly help the working but must impede it. These thoughts that come are not true. Those who left, left because they mingled their own ego with the sadhana — ambition, vanity and other wrong movements — and wanted to use the force that sadhana gave them for these things, — or

they had to go because the pull of the old life, family, home, action in the world outside was too strong for them. Also the idea that Mother is leading all others happily along and they are becoming perfect and only you are left out, is the usual delusion that comes when one allows despondency to rise. Almost all have these difficulties to overcome and these difficulties rise again and again till the inner being is sufficiently developed to make them impossible. There is therefore no reason to suppose that others will be able and you will not be able.

The change of the old habitual movements of the nature cannot be done in a single stroke; the inner consciousness has to grow in such a way that finally it occupies the outer being also and renders these things impossible. What I have written to you about these things and the attitude to be taken is the knowledge that we have and the truth of the human nature and of sadhana confirmed by our and by all spiritual experience. It is your outer being that has these reactions and not your inner nature. You have only to trust in the Mother and follow what I say and these difficulties will be worked out of the outer being and return no more; but patience is necessary because it takes time, not in you alone, but in all. Do not allow such thoughts as the idea "what is the use of spiritual experiences, since my nature is not changed" etc., for these are thoughts of the mind's ignorance. Recover the attitude and the resolution that you had taken and were developing. Keep the will and the faith and in quietude and patience let the Mother work all out in you.

26 March 1936

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Be sure that the Mother will be always with you to carry you upon the path. Difficulties come and difficulties go, but, she being with you, the victory is sure.

18 July 1936

Difficulties and the Mother's Force

What is the means of dealing day by day with difficulties?

Equality, rejection, calling in of the Mother's force.

1 August 1933

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When difficulties arise, remain quiet within and call down the Mother's Force to remove them.

26 August 1933

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In my sadhana I have received only what I prayed for. I have yearned greatly for what has come to me. The Divine's reasonless Mercy is not so important to me as Tapasya, the capacity to open to Him and hold Him. This is my belief.

It was by your personal efforts without guidance that you got into difficulties and into a heated condition in which you could not meditate etc. I asked you to drop the effort and remain quiet and you did so. My intention was that by your remaining quiet, it would be possible for the Mother's Force to work in you and establish a better starting-point and a course of initial experiences. It was what was beginning to come; but if your mind again becomes active and tries to arrange the sadhana for itself, then disturbances are likely to come. The Divine Guidance works best when the psychic is open and in front (yours was beginning to open), but it can also work even when the sadhak is either not conscious of it or else knows it only by its results.

8 September 1933

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Is there no way for me to follow your path happily? I will not be able to do anything for the Mother in this life, so I simply try to stay away from the defects of previous lives. Why can't I understand anything? Why can't the Mother pull me towards her? What is it I feel hurt about and worry about? Can you explain it to me?

All this is of no utility — complainings, questionings etc. of this kind should be put aside. You have to go on quietly, without depression or trouble, receiving the Mother's forces, allowing them to work, rejecting all that stands in their way, but not

troubled by difficulty or defects in yourself or by any delay or slowness in the working.

25 October 1933

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This kind of grief and despondency are the worst obstacles one can raise up in the sadhana — they ought not to be indulged in. What one cannot do oneself one can get done by calling the Mother's force. To receive that and let it work in you is the true means of success in the sadhana.

1934

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Do not brood over your difficulties. Leave them to the Mother and let her Force work them out of you.

22 March 1935

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In such conditions try to remain as quiet as possible within and, if you cannot call the Mother, think of her and expect the help of the Force.

These attacks are always on the outer part of the consciousness covering up the inner being. One should always try to detach (separate) the inner being and look at the attack as a movement of the surface.

13 June 1935

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We will send you help, so that you may get rid of the obstruction.

Never allow this idea "I am not able" or "I am not doing enough" to come and vex you; it is a tamasic suggestion and brings depression and depression opens the way to the attacks of the wrong forces. Your position should be, "Let me do what I can; the Mother's Force is there, the Divine is there to see that in due time all will be done."

4 November 1935

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There has been no letter from you for three nights. Whatever difficulty has come across, keep your faith and reliance on the Mother and lay open whatever opposes from outside or within

to the working of the Mother's Force.

25 March 1936

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Many times I feel hatred towards my own self because I neither have the ability nor the skill in me to do anything. I start doing some work and then leave it undone. I have no perseverance. What is the reason for this?

These come from a certain restlessness in the vital. Most people put a control of the will on these things and try to get rid of them in that way. But they disappear fully only when the inner being is awakened and a new Force (the Mother's) begins fully to work on the nature.

9 April 1937

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Do not admit these suggestions of despair or impatience. Give time for the Mother's force to act.

12 June 1937

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Whatever difficulties still remain, be sure that they will be surmounted. There is no need for the outer being to be nervous — the Mother's Force and the devotion within you will be sufficient to overcome all that stands in the way.

Difficulties and the Mother's Grace

You must throw all that away. Such depression can only make you shut to what Mother is giving you. There is absolutely no good reason for such an attitude. The existence of difficulties is a known thing in the Yoga. That is no reason for questioning the final victory or the effectivity of the Divine Grace.

4 February 1933

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Can it be believed that the Mother's Grace is acting even when the difficulties do not disappear?

In that case everybody might say that all my difficulties must

disappear at once, I must attain to perfection immediately and without difficulties, otherwise it proves that the Mother's Grace is not with me.

20 July 1933

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You should not yield to sorrow or despair — there is no reason why you should. The Mother's grace has not been withdrawn from you for a moment. Do not allow the attacks of others to shake you like this — you know well the motives from which they act — and for the rest they are not going to pursue any farther the course which a fit of passion dictated to them. The protection will be with you and you need not fear or sorrow any longer. Put your trust in the Divine and shake off all this like a nightmare that has passed. Believe that our love and grace are with you.

Turning to the Mother for Help

It is the physical mind that feels too inert — but if some part of the being turns to the Mother, that is enough to bring the help.

25 January 1934

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I feel a sense of tiredness, depression, sadness, but all the same I stick to you. I am quiet sometimes, but still feel sad. What should I do?

Remain firm and turned in the one direction — towards the Mother.

The sense of sadness and depression does not want to go — it comes and goes as it likes. Tell me what to do.

When the habit of these moods (depression or revolt) has been formed, they cannot be got rid of at once. There are three ways of doing it — (1) to strengthen your own will, so that nothing can come or stay as *it* likes but only as *you* like; (2) to think of something else, plunge the mind in some healthy activity; (3) to turn to the Mother and call in her force. One can do any

of these or all, but even in doing them, it will take a little time to get rid of the habit.

1934

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If meditation brings a headache, you should not meditate. It is a mistake to think that meditation is indispensable to the sadhana. There are so many who do not do it, but they are near to the Mother and progress as well as those who have long meditations.

The one thing necessary is to be turned to the Mother and that is all that is needed. Do not fear or be sad, but let the Mother do quietly her work in you and through you and all will be well.

16 March 1935

Personal Effort and the Mother's Help

The Mother's help is always there for those who are willing to receive it. But you must be conscious of your vital nature, and the vital nature must consent to change. It is no use merely observing that it is unwilling and that, when thwarted, it creates depression in you. Always the vital nature is not at first willing and always when it is thwarted or asked to change, it creates this depression by its revolt or refusal of consent. You have to insist till it recognises the truth and is willing to be transformed and to accept the Mother's help and grace. If the mind is sincere and the psychic aspiration complete and true, the vital can always be made to change.

15 July 1932

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As for the feeling of people that there must be something bad in you, it does not arise merely from your relations with X. The Mother and I do not speak of "good" and "bad" in this way; we look only at what helps or hinders the sadhana. There is nothing in you that is not in many other sadhaks. What makes people hesitate to help you is your subjection to vital moods — all this weeping, self-starvation, uncertain temper; your unsteadiness — for today you accept help, tomorrow you reject it; your want of

trust in others — which you have often expressed in your letters; your quickness to take offence, your readiness to suspect people's motives, especially in their behaviour towards you. Others have these faults, but they try to control them. You, when a mood like these comes upon you, seem to yield to it and let it have free course.

If you want to get on in your sadhana and if you want people to feel comfortable with you and ready to help you, you must get rid of these vital moods and defects — you must put a control on yourself and try to change. The Mother's Force is there to help you, but there must be your active consent and cooperation, your own steady will and endeavour.

1 November 1933

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I cannot do anything myself so long as the inertia in me is so strong. May I ask, what does the Mother mean to do with the inertia in me?

If Mother's "doing" with the inertia were sufficient, it would have been done long ago and also the supramental down in you. The question is not what the Mother is going to do with it but what you are going to do with it.

29 November 1936

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These ideas are wrong suggestions that you must throw away. There is no reason why you should be able to do nothing in this life or all should be postponed to another. It is in this life that you have been called and are to reach the Divine. The Mother has not left you to yourself. But I think it is advisable that you should spend some time daily in concentration to keep the conscious connection and also write more often; if not every day, yet every second or third day.

17 December 1936

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It is not that I want you to do all by your own strength; the Mother's force is there. I should like you however to persist in meditation and the endeavour to be quiet within; even if at

present there is no definite self-understanding or experience, this is the way to open the nature to them; we will try to do the rest for you.

20 December 1936

Opening to the Mother in Difficulty

There is nothing wrong in your experience or insincere in your expression of it; to write is helpful and it is our wish that you should go on doing it. An occasional sinking of the consciousness happens to everybody. The causes are various, some touch from outside, something not yet changed or not sufficiently changed in the vital, especially the lower vital, some inertia or obscurity rising up from the physical parts of nature. When it comes, remain quiet, open yourself to the Mother and call back the true condition, and aspire for a clear and undisturbed discrimination showing you from within yourself the cause or the thing that needs to be set right.

4 March 1932

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The attack of darkness is over, but my body is still restless and my consciousness troubled. I have lost connection with your peace, the peace that used to make the feelings quiet and the body restful. But I can still aspire and I am hopeful to get back your touch again.

However strong the attack may be and even if it overcomes for the time being, still it will rapidly pass away if you have formed the habit of opening to the Mother. The peace will come back, if you remain quiet and keep yourself open to it and to the Force. Once something of the Truth has shown itself within you, it will always, even if for a time heavily clouded over with wrong movements, shine out again like the sun in heaven. Therefore persevere with confidence and never lose courage.

14 March 1932

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You should not allow yourself to get upset by these small things. If when the movements you complain of come, you remain quiet

and open to the Mother and call her, after a time you will find a change beginning to come in you. Meditation is not enough; think of the Mother and offer your work and action to her, that will help you better.

7 April 1932

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The play of the mental and vital defects in the human nature which belongs to the Ignorance is allowed — as also the attacks and suggestions of the Asuric forces — so long as there is anything in the nature which responds to these things. If they rise in you in the presence of the Mother, it is because then a strong pressure is put on them so that they have either to go out or to put up a fight for existence. The remedy is to open to the Mother only and to reject entirely and at all times all other forces, and to reject them most when they become most active. Faith, sincerity, perseverance will do the rest.

16 November 1932

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Yesterday I prayed, “O Divine Mother, how can I realise that I am always guided by Thee and that Thy presence is in all things and everywhere. I pray that I may love Thee and be Thy child and an instrument for Thy work.”

Yes. The more one is open to the Mother’s action, the more easily difficulties get solved and the right thing is done.

21 September 1934

The Mother’s Protection

The Mother puts her protection round all the sadhakas, but if by their own act or attitude they go out of the circle of the protection there may be undesirable consequences.

1 April 1933

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I think that one observes the rules here either because one feels it is for one’s spiritual good or because it is better, for love of the Mother, not to do otherwise and thus go out of her protection.

It is precisely that — one immediately goes out of the protection.

8 June 1933

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I was invited by friends to go to a restaurant and accepted.

Later I learned that you were opposed to the idea. What should we — those of us who live outside the Asram — do?

The Mother has made an arrangement with a view to all the occult forces and the best possible conditions for the protection of the sadhaks from certain forces of death and disease etc. It cannot work perfectly because the sadhaks themselves have not the right attitude towards food and kindred vital-physical things. But still there is a protection. If however the sadhaks go outside her formation, it must be on their own responsibility — the Mother does not and cannot sanction it. But this arrangement is for the Asram and not for those who are outside.

14 July 1933

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When the Mother's protection is put around a person, how does he go out of it?

By desire, wrong thoughts, wrong actions, wrong feelings — by revolt, pride, ambition, lust or any other vital indulgence.

16 July 1933

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Last night I dreamt that in my native village I entered a house where a madman came to attack me. Being afraid of the madman, I ran away for I have always been afraid of madmen, especially violent ones. My movement was slow, but along the way I found a stick and got rid of the attacker.

It was a dream of the vital plane where all kinds of dangers occur until you get courage to face them. If there is no fear or if there is the protection of the Mother (which becomes manifest by remembering or calling her) then these dangers come to nothing. It is the fear of madmen that brought the thing in the vital; such

things as this fear have to be thrown out of the nature.

8 September 1933

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All would like the Mother's protection to remain with them; but perhaps certain conditions have to be fulfilled to allow her to encircle them fully?

There are very few who allow it. There is a general protection around all, but most go out of it by their attitude, thoughts or actions or open the way to other forces.

24 August 1934

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If a sadhak has the Mother's circle of protection around him, I don't think he will have gloom, depression, doubt or anything hostile to the Divine.

These things may try to come but they will not be able to enter or stay.

24 August 1934

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Yesterday I went with X and Y for an outing. We bought plantains from the market and ate them. After our return I began to feel out of sorts and by the time of meditation the body appeared to be weak and a little feverish. Was my going out and eating plantains inadvisable?

It is better to let the Mother know when you go far out like that so that it may be with her protection that you go. The eating of plantains from the bazaar was indeed a mistake—Mother has several times warned against it and X knows that. The body often becomes sensitive at a certain stage of the Yoga, but there should at the same time be the development of a higher Force which will protect and push back all attacks upon it.

1934

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These things that come to frighten you are merely impressions thrown on you by small vital forces which want to prevent you (by making you nervous) pushing on in sadhana. They can really

do nothing to you, only you must reject all fear. Keep always this thought when these things come: "The Mother's protection is with me, nothing bad can happen"; for when there is the psychic opening and one puts one's faith in the Mother, that is sufficient to ward these things off. Many sadhaks learn, when they have alarming dreams, to call the Mother's name in the dream itself and then the things that menace them become helpless or cease. You must therefore refuse to be intimidated and reject these impressions with contempt. If there is anything frightening, call down the Mother's protection.

The heat you felt was probably due to some difficulty in the force coming down below the centre between the eyes where it has been working up till now. When such sensations or the unease you once felt or similar things come, you must not be alarmed, but remain quiet and let the difficulty pass.

What you had before that, the moonlight in the forehead, was this working in the centre there between the eyebrows, the centre of the inner mind, will and vision. The moonlight you saw is the light of spirituality and it was this that was entering into your mind through the centre, with the effect of the widening in the heart like a sky filled with moonlight. Afterwards came some endeavour to prepare the lower part of the mind whose centre is in the throat and join it with the inner mind and make it open; but there was some difficulty, as is very usually the case, which caused the heat. It was probably the fire of tapas, Agni, trying to open the way to this centre.

The experience of being taken up into the sky is a very common one and it means an ascent of the consciousness into a higher world of light and peace.

The idea that you must go more and more within and turn wholly to the Mother is quite right. It is when there is no attachment to outward things for their own sake and all is only for the Mother and the life through the inner psychic being is centred in her that the best condition is created for the spiritual realisation.

11 November 1935

Fear in these experiences is a thing one must get rid of; if there is any danger, a call to the Mother is sufficient, but in reality there is none — for the protection is there. 29 November 1935

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This morning around eight o'clock I heard a great crash. I ran out and found our X sitting on the footpath with blood coming out of the wound on his forehead. The wheels of his cycle were under the wheel of a car. Could the Mother not have foreseen the possibility of this accident and prevented it? Or could it not be prevented because X had in some manner gone out of the zone of her protection?

It was not possible to prevent the accident. When the danger comes, a call to the Mother is the first thing to be done, that makes the general protection at once effective. X was in too externalised a state to do that and he did the very opposite thing to what should have been done — trying to get away in front of the car instead of behind it. But the true cause was something more internal — one of those choices made by the inner being (not necessarily known to the conscious mind) which bring these things as a response. 27 January 1936

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The experience you had of the power of the Name and the protection is that of everyone who has used it with the same faith and reliance. To those who call from the heart for the protection, it cannot fail. Do not allow any outward circumstance to shake the faith in you; for nothing gives greater strength than this faith to go through and arrive at the goal. Knowledge and tapasya, whatever their force, have a less sustaining power — faith is the strongest staff for the journey.

The protection is there over you and the watchful love of the Mother. Rely upon it and let your being open more and more to it — then it will repel attacks and always uphold you.

8 October 1936

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It is not because the Mother has withdrawn her protection — she has not done that. It is more likely that it [*the difficulty*] came because you have been going too much out of your inner being and externalising yourself. It is better to draw back within again and recover the inner calm and peace.

Calling the Mother in Difficulty

Why this bad feeling? I am feeling all bad today.

When in difficulties always remain as quiet within as possible and call the Mother.

Surely the Mother's force is there to transform you and it will prevail.

You must progress to a point at which there is always something within which in spite of any surface disturbance is always quiet, unshaken, holding on to the Mother — then these things will no longer be able to cloud the inner consciousness as now.

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Plenty of people have this condition (it is human nature) and there is naturally a way of coming out of it — having full faith in the Mother to quiet the inner mind (even if the outer continues to be troublesome) and call in it the Mother's Peace and Force, which is always there above you, into the Adhar. Once that is there, consciously, to keep yourself open to it and let it go on working with a full adhesion, with a constant support of your consent, with a constant rejection of all that is not that, till all the inner being is tranquillised and filled with the Mother's Force, Peace, Joy, Presence — then the outer nature will be obliged to follow suit in its turn.

8 May 1933

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In a dream I saw a dull painting with an expanse of water in the background, and in the centre a temple with trees in front. As I was looking at it, I went on calling the Mother and the painting began changing — the waters actually began to move and white light was falling on them here and there until the

whole picture was sparkling like silver. Then I woke up. Does this mean that some light will come into the obscurity in me?

Yes, it is a symbol,— the expanse of water means the ordinary outward consciousness which is obscure and dull, the temple is the psychic centre behind it. By calling the Mother her white light comes upon the dark consciousness and begins to change the darkness into lustre.

27 May 1933

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For about a month I have the feeling that devotion, love and aspiration for the Divine have disappeared from me. I feel this way even during the morning pranam. Mother, I pray to Thee to shower Thy Grace and inspire me to have devotion, love and aspiration for Thee once again. What may be the reason for this?

You may have allowed your consciousness to go too much outward and get taken up by ordinary things. It is usually when the outer physical consciousness covers up the inner being that this happens. The aspiration is not gone, but it no longer rises to the surface. If you remain very quiet inwardly and call to the Mother, it should come back.

13 July 1933

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When I awoke this morning, I found the atmosphere surcharged with the Mother's presence. The air around me, the cot on which I lay, everything was filled with her presence. A burning aspiration was in my heart. The consciousness there was aspiring intensely, flapping its wings like a caged bird, trying to leave the body and unite with the Mother present everywhere. After some time it seemed to me that although I was in the body I was free, free of every limitation, but helpless, strengthless, drifting away and exposed to the hostile forces. Then I saw the red, rolling, frowning eyes of X, threatening me. Helpless in this limitless space, I called the Mother and the atmosphere was clear.

What happened in your experience was that the vital being got free from the body through its desire to unite with the Mother

(you met the Mother on the border between the vital and physical) and lived with its own life independent of the body. It entered into the vital world and, not being sheltered any longer in the body, felt helpless at first, till it called the Mother. The appearance of X there might possibly have been some part of the vital of X himself, but was more probably a vital being in his shape, perhaps the very vital being who has been troubling him. When you go into the vital world, you meet many such things, — the one sufficient protection is to call the Mother.

7 September 1933

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This morning after pranam I felt a sudden uprush of impatience, restlessness, uneasiness and a quick, strong beating of the pulse. Confusion was there too. I sat down and after a long time the dark forces began to grow less, bringing a normal state again. My pulse also became normal. Is it due to the Mother's action? Have I been able to make some place for her in the lower parts of my being?

It is the forces of the Ignorance that begin to lay siege and then make a mass attack. Every time such an attack can be defeated and cast out, there is a clearance in the Adhar, a new field gained for the Mother in the mind, vital or physical or the adjacent parts of the being. That the place in the vital occupied by the Mother is increasing is shown by the fact that you are now offering a strong resistance to these sieges that used formerly to overpower you altogether.

In the afternoon all my problems started coming to the front. I felt that they had become too big a burden for me to bear. Then I felt an opening in the heart, and I opened up a conversation with the Mother. I told her all my joys and sorrows and I got some consolation and strength.

That is good. To be able to call the Mother's presence or force at such times is the best way to meet the difficulty.

Was all this mere imagination of the heart and mind? Was I in touch with Mother? Did she hear the language of my heart?

It is with the Mother who is always with you and in you that you converse. The only thing is to hear aright, so that no other voice can come in between.

7 December 1933

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To call to the Mother always is the main thing and with that to aspire and assent to the Light when it comes, to reject and detach oneself from desire and any dark movement. But if one cannot do these other things successfully, then call and still call.

The Mother's force is there with you even when you do not feel it; remain quiet and persevere.

15 September 1934

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When X complained to me about her difficulty, I told her that it could be removed by calling the Mother's help. But she argued that there was no hope for the calls of a newcomer like herself to be heard by the Mother. There were so many calls coming from the older and advanced sadhaks that fresh calls from a beginner like herself would be but calls in the wilderness and go unheard in that clamour. I replied that if the Mother does not come in answer to our calls she must have her reasons; possibly she has more important work to do than to act according to our bidding. Why should we insist that she should leave that work and attend to us? The Mother has never been known to fail in answering when a real call is sent to her straight from the heart, for the very force in the call presupposes her presence. When I told this to X, I felt a strong pressure and vibrations from the centre of my forehead downwards between the eyebrows. What is the reason for this?

X's reasonings are not very sound; yours are better if not altogether flawless. The Mother is not limited by the physical mind, so even if she has "more important" work to do, that would not in the least stand in the way of her listening to a call from the wilderness or anywhere else. Also spiritual things do not go

by seniority; so why should the clamour of "older cases" keep her? She can be and is with all who need her. So your "Mother does not come? will not come?" is not quite to the point, but the rest of your answer is. Mother is there even now and working in you, it is only your inner vision and feeling that are not opened so that you cannot see or feel her.

What came down to the centre of the forehead was the answer, let us say the touch of the Mother's presence,—her consciousness, her force working in you to open the centre of the inner vision. For in the centre of the forehead between the eyebrows is the centre of the inner mind, inner will, the inner vision and when that opens one begins to see and know what is to the physical eye invisible and to the surface mind unknowable.

11 October 1935

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It is an obsession from the subconscious physical bringing back habitual thoughts, "I can't call rightly—I have no real aspiration" etc.; the depression, the memory etc. are from the same source. It is no use indulging in these ideas. If you cannot call the Mother in what you think the right way, call her in any way—if you can't call her, think of her with the will to be rid of these things. Don't worry yourself with the idea whether you have true aspiration or not—the psychic being wants and that is sufficient. The rest is the Divine Grace, on which one must steadfastly rely—one's own merit, virtue or capacity is not the thing that brings the realisation.

I shall put the force to rid you of this obsession in any case, but if you can abandon these habitual ideas, it will make the disappearance of the attack easier.

4 January 1937

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It is always best in these difficulties to tell the Mother and call for her help. It is probably something in the vital that needs somebody to protect and care for—but you must accustom yourself to the idea that it is not needed and the best thing is to give the person to the care of the Mother—offer the object of

your affection to her.

15 January 1937

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As to the experience, certainly X's call for help did reach the Mother, even though all the details she relates in her letter might not have been present to the Mother's physical mind. Always calls of this kind are coming to the Mother, sometimes a hundred close upon each other and always the answer is given. The occasions are of all kinds, but whatever the need that occasions the call, the Force is there to answer it. That is the principle of this action on the occult plane. It is not of the same kind as an ordinary human action and does not need a written or oral communication from the one who calls; an interchange of psychic communication is quite sufficient to set the Force at work. At the same time it is not an impersonal Force and the suggestion of a divine energy that is there ready to answer and satisfy anybody who calls it is not at all relevant here. It is something personal to the Mother and if she had not this power and this kind of action she would not be able to do her work; but this is quite different from the outside practical working on the material plane where the methods must necessarily be different, although the occult working and the material working can and do join and the occult power give to the material working its utmost efficacy. As for the one who is helped not feeling the force at work, his knowing might help very substantially the effective working, but it need not be indispensable; the effect can be there even if he does not know how the thing is done. For instance, in your work in Calcutta and elsewhere my help has been always with you and I do not think it can be said that it was ineffective; but it was of the same occult nature and could have had the same effect even if you had not been conscious in some way that my help was with you.

24 March 1949

Praying to the Mother

You say, "When one is a sadhak the prayer should be for the inner things belonging to the sadhana and for outer things

only so far as they are necessary for that and for the Divine work." This latter portion about prayer for outer things is not clear to me. Can you kindly explain?

All depends on whether the outer things are sought for one's own convenience, pleasure, profit etc., or as part of the spiritual life, necessary for the success of the work, the development and fitness of the instruments etc. It is a question mainly of inner attitude. If for instance you pray for money for buying nice food to please the palate, that is not a proper prayer for a sadhak; if you pray for money to give to the Mother and help her work, then it is legitimate.

I quote several types of prayers which I offer and shall be grateful to know which of them are outer or inner, right or wrong, helpful or hindrance, or what amendment to them can make them pure:

1. In the night-time when I sit to read and an untimely attack of sleep comes, I pray to the Mother to be freed from the attack.

If your reading is part of the sadhana, that is all right.

2. When I go to sleep, I pray to the Mother for her Force to take over my sadhana during the sleep, to make my sleep conscious and luminous, to protect me during the sleep, to keep me conscious of the Mother.

3. When I wake up any time in the sleep, I pray to the Mother to be with me and protect me.

These two are part of the sadhana.

4. While going out for a walk and during it, I pray to the Mother to give me force to take more exercise and to gain more strength and health and I thank the Mother for the help.

If strength and health are requested as being necessary for the sadhana and the development of the perfection of the instrument it is all right.

5. When I see any dog on the way while walking, I at once pray to the Mother to protect me from its attack and remove my fear.

A call for protection is always permissible. The removal of fear is part of the sadhana.

6. When I go for food, I pray for the Mother's Force to help me to offer every morsel to the Mother, to get everything easily digested, to make a growth of complete equality and detachment in my consciousness enabling me to take any food with equal Rasa of universal Ananda without any insistence or seeking or greed or desire.

This is again part of the sadhana.

7. When I go for work, I pray for the Mother's Force to take over my work, help me and make me do it well and carefully with love, devotion and pleasure, with the remembrance of the Mother and the feeling of being supported and helped by her without ego or desire.

This also.

8. During the work also when there is a pause, I pray for force, help and constant remembrance.

This also.

9. When any bad or impure thought, seeing or sensation comes into me, I pray for its removal and purity.

This also.

10. When I am reading, I try to pray when possible to understand all quickly, to grasp and absorb completely.

If it is as sadhana or for the development of the instrument, it is all right.

11. When I commit any mistake in the work, I pray to be more conscious, alert and unerring.

This also is part of the sadhana.

12. When I go to the post office to register a parcel of Prasad to my friend, I pray to have the parcel accepted immediately and avoid any delay.

That can be done, if avoidance of waste of time is considered as part of the right regulation of the life of sadhana.

13. When I sit down for meditation, I pray for Mother's Force to take over my meditation and make it deep, steady, concentrated and free from all attacks of troubling thoughts, vital restlessness, etc.

This is part of the sadhana.

14. In depression, difficulty, wrong suggestions, doubt, inertia, on any occasion or happening I pray to the Mother to have courage, keep faith, face them and overcome them.

This also.

15. At all other times as far as I can, I pray to the Mother to fill me with her peace, power, light etc., or offer any other kind of required prayer, and thank her for supporting, strengthening and sustaining me.

This also.

16 September 1938

The Mother's Help and the Hostile Forces

There are times when I think myself to be a simple vessel and imagine that things coming from the outside have no importance, for the adhar can be purified and what is not wanted can either be thrown out or allowed to end in a natural way. But at other times I feel that every outside contact may have harmful effects, and care and tapasya are needed to avoid confusion. I want to know which view is correct.

It is not possible to make a fixed rule covering all cases and circumstances; sometimes one has to remain quiet waiting for the Mother's light and force to act, sometimes it is necessary to use an active tapasya. But one thing is always necessary, to refuse to accept the adverse forces and suggestions that try to disorganise and disturb the system; for the basis of the Yoga must be peace, quiet, clarity, self-possession and nothing should be allowed to invade and upset the basis and substitute confusion and disorder.

13 September 1931

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It might be charitable to warn X not to listen to imbecile remarks [*about the Mother*] of this kind, from whomsoever they may come, and, if he hears them, to do nothing to propagate them. He had been progressing extremely well because he opened himself to the Mother; but if he allows stupidities like that to enter his mind, it may influence him, close him to the Mother and stop his progress.

As for Y, if he said and thought a thing like that, it explains why he has been suffering in health so much lately. If one makes oneself a mouthpiece of the hostile forces and lends oneself to their falsehoods, it is not surprising that something in him should get out of order.

7 January 1932

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I see now the damage I have done by my disobedience in work. I must go about my work consciously, performing it as a service to the Mother. I must work with full concentration and feel a connection with the Mother.

The difficulty this time must have come from this very act of distrust and disobedience. For distrust and disobedience are like falsehood (they are themselves a falsity, based on false ideas and impulses), — they interfere in the action of the Power, prevent it from being felt or working fully and diminish the force of the Protection. It was the same thing that made you lose touch for a while — for the adverse vital Formation always makes use of

these wrong movements to cloud the consciousness. Not only in your inward concentration, but in your outward acts and movements you must take the right attitude. If you do that and put everything under the Mother's guidance, you will find that difficulties begin to diminish or are much more easily got over and things become steadily smoother.

Now that these things have happened you should learn from them and feel the necessity of being, as you say, conscious in your work. In your work and acts you must do the same as in your concentration. Open to the Mother, put them under her guidance, call in the peace, the supporting Power, the protection and, in order that they may work, reject all wrong influences that might come in their way by creating wrong, careless or unconscious movements.

Follow this principle and your whole being will become one, under one rule, in the peace and sheltering Power and Light.

17 March 1932

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At 4.30 in the afternoon, while serving vegetables in the Dining Room, I suddenly fell into a very unhappy condition. My consciousness entered into a world of obscurity and uneasiness and wild vital forces. Innumerable hostile suggestions pierced my helpless consciousness. Then the form of X appeared and he threatened me, saying that my fate would be the same as his—I would have to leave the Asram. Later, while in this condition I passed by Y's room and felt that the Mahakali forces of the Mother were around me; I also felt that her very name would create fear in the hostile forces. As I thought of her with feeling, suddenly all was clear.

It is the Force that attacks everyone in the Asram who can at all be attacked in this way—the X form is merely an appearance which it took for the sake of having a more concrete effect. It is a vital violence which suggests always a catastrophic breaking of the personal sadhana or of my work. Such a Force is naturally met by the power of Mahakali. You felt it while passing Y's room because it is always there with Y, and it is by that that he meets the suggestions of this Force when it comes. The Mother's name

called with faith is usually enough to meet it. It disappeared at once because it is a Falsehood which cannot stand once the light of the Truth touches it. It prevailed with X because he welcomed its suggestions of pride, revolt, hostility to the Mother, even clung to them — otherwise it would have had no chance.

2 October 1933

*

This hostile force is still trying to attack me and it also wants to harm you and the Mother. When I utter your name and Mother's name, it tries to finish me and make wrong impressions about Mother and turn me against her. Why is it still troubling me?

This Force is one that is there to break the Yoga if it can — it is not only you it attacks but all who do the sadhana. It hates the Mother and myself because we bring the Light into the consciousness of the physical world and it wants to keep the physical world in darkness. It knows that the only way it can succeed in preventing the success of the sadhak in his sadhana is, first, by turning him against the Mother, or, if it cannot do that, by persuading him that he is unfit and so disturbing him that he gets upset and loses faith and courage. What you have to do is always to remain calm and call in the Mother's force and to refuse steadily all the suggestions whether against yourself or against the Mother. Preserve your calm always, keep an entire faith in the Mother and in your own spiritual destiny. Reply always that whatever it may say, you are the Mother's child and cannot fail in the sadhana.

5 November 1933

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These suggestions are what we call hostile suggestions — they come from a Force which is wandering about in the atmosphere trying to do harm to the sadhana. Its suggestions are always the same, to whomever they come — the suggestion of going away, the suggestion of unfitness and failure, this suggestion of madness, and a certain fixed number of others with the same purpose. There is only one thing to do with them — never to

listen to them; one must reply as you have done and dismiss them summarily from the consciousness. If one takes this simple stand, "I have come for the Yoga — I will allow nothing to divert me from my aim; I have the demand of the soul within and the help and protection of the Mother", then these things can no longer approach or approach in vain.

I am glad you have the aspiration and the push awake; it is always bound to revive after every interval and to carry you farther. Keep it and progress.

17 March 1934

*

A few sadhaks here are supposed to be using the occult process. But when it is done to harm a fellow sadhak, is this not an egoistic use of occult power, more like the use of black magic? I told X that when occult power is used, without asking Mother, to satisfy one's like or dislike, a clash may occur on the vital plane and some disembodied being there may give a dangerous hit. He said it is not really like this — rather it happens naturally as the result of a play of forces on the vital plane.

It is obviously a wholly Asuric thing to do when it is turned to egoistic purposes or against fellow sadhaks. It is certainly not a natural play of forces over which one has no control. Anybody doing that may get a serious back-blow, especially if it is done against people protected by the Mother — for, knocking against a wall of protection the force put out may automatically recoil on the sender.

10 September 1934

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It will not do to yield to these attacks which are without reason and obviously are only waves from outside. You should recognise them as such, things not your own but forced on you by a Force from outside and when they come remain still, reject and call the Mother's force to liberate you.

15 July 1936

Natural Disasters, Adverse Forces and the Mother's Help

Is it true that earthquakes are inevitable phenomena in the process of the Divine Manifestation on the earth and the transformation of matter?

Not at all. The method of the Divine Manifestation is through calm and harmony, not through a catastrophic upheaval. The latter is the sign of a struggle, generally of conflicting vital forces, but at any rate a struggle on the inferior plane.

Have I been kept here, outside the Asram, so that I can, by constant surrender to the Mother, rise above the difficulties of this environment and control the adverse forces that now touch and move and affect my lower nature?

You think too much of adverse forces. That kind of preoccupation causes much unnecessary struggle. Fix your mind on the positive side — open to the Mother's power, concentrate on her protection, call for light, calm and peace and purity and growth into the divine consciousness and knowledge.

Am I right in thinking that every bad movement in my life is the result of my past karma and takes place with the sanction of the Mother because she is testing me at every moment?

This idea of tests also is not a healthy idea and ought not to be pushed too far. Tests are applied not by the Divine but by the forces of the lower planes — mental, vital, physical — and allowed by the Divine because that is part of the soul's training and helps it to know itself, its powers and the limitations it has to outgrow. The Mother is not testing you at every moment, but rather helping you at every moment to rise beyond the necessity of tests and difficulties which belong to the inferior consciousness. To be always conscious of that help will be your best safeguard against all attacks whether of adverse powers or of your own lower nature.

23 February 1931

Helping Others and the Mother's Help

The best way to help X is to assist her by your own example and atmosphere to get the right attitude. Instead of the sense that she is very ill, she should be encouraged to have a bright and confident feeling, open to receive strength and health from us, contributing by her own faith to a speedy recovery. These ideas that they do not see the Mother, are outside the atmosphere, at a distance, are just the wrong notions and most likely to come in the way of and block your sisters' receptivity; it is surprising that you should accept or echo them and not react against them at once. They are here in the Asram (a little nearer or farther makes no difference), in the Mother's presence and atmosphere; meeting her every day at the Pranam where everyone who is open can receive as much of her touch and her help as they can hold,—that is what they should feel and make the most of their opportunity and not waste it by a negative attitude.

For yourself what you must have with other sadhaks (including your sisters) is a harmonious relation free from any vital attachment (indifference is not asked from you) and free from any indulgence in wrong vital movements of the opposite kind (such as dislike, jealousy or ill-will). It is through the psychic consciousness that you have found it possible to be in a true constant relation with the Mother and your aim is to make that the basis of all your life, action and feelings; all in you, all you feel, say and do should be consistent with that basis. If all proceeds from that psychic union of your consciousness with the Mother's, dedicating everything to her, then you will develop the right relations with others.

10 February 1932

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To think one can help others is a defect in the sadhana. How can one help others who is himself full of imperfection, falsehood and darkness? Those who really assist others must turn themselves into channels through which the Mother can act. Otherwise it is just vital ego trying to show others that one can "help".

Quite right. One can be a channel for the Mother's help, but the idea of oneself helping others comes in the way and so long as it is there one cannot be a truly effective channel. 17 April 1935

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I believe that I cannot really help others or rightly influence them. Am I right in this?

One can help another truly only when it is the Mother that helps through him and he is aware of it and does not think that it is he who is helping. 6 May 1935

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I have observed that someone with a sensitive disposition becomes very prone to the easy admission of forces from the vital world or from persons who are full of lower vital desires, especially when the sensitive person has a highly sympathetic attitude which manifests in nursing others or trying to save others, in lavishing emotional pity, in philanthropy, etc.

That is very interesting — for it agrees with the Mother's constant insistence that to feel sympathy or any emotion of the weak philanthropic kind with those possessed by vital forces is most dangerous as it may bring an attack upon oneself which may take any form. One must do what is to be done but abstain from all such weakness. 11 October 1936

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Mother does not set much value on propaganda, but still work of that kind can be her work. Only it has to come from her impulsion, be done with quietude, with measure, in the way she wants it to be done. It is from the inner being that it should be done in union with the Mother's will, not from the vital mind's eager impulse. To concentrate most on one's own spiritual growth and experience is the first necessity of the sadhak — to be eager to help others draws away from the inner work. To grow in the spirit is the greatest help one can give to others, for then something flows out naturally to those around that helps them. 9 April 1937

The Mother's Help in Worldly Matters

The Mother does not usually give specific advice such as you ask for in regard to the Insurance company. You must learn to get the true inspiration in the mind's silence. 18 August 1932

*

X has written me a letter and asked something which I have marked for you to read. Kindly tell me what to answer her.

It is not possible for the Mother to promise to give help in worldly matters. She intervenes only in special cases. There are some of course who by their openness and their faith get her help in any worldly difficulty or trouble but that is a different thing. They simply remember or call the Mother and in due time some result comes. 9 October 1935

Section Four

The Mother in the Life of the Ashram

The Mother and the Sadhana in the Ashram

The Mother Does the Sadhana

In what way does the Mother do the sadhana for the sadhaks?

The sadhana is done by the Mother according to the truth and necessity of each nature and of each plane of Nature. It is not one fixed process.

13 September 1933

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I heard from someone: "The Mother has chosen only those who have got capacity to do this Yoga, but they will reach the goal only if the vital gets transformed. If not, they will realise in the next birth." Is it so?

The Mother has never spoken of anything to be done in the next birth.

Naturally the vital has to be transformed if one is to succeed.

15 January 1934

*

Why do we feel that the Mother is experiencing this or that?
Has she still to go on experiencing?

Experiencing what? She has her own experiences in bringing down the things that have to be brought down—but what the sadhaks experience she had long ago. The Divine does the sadhana first for the world and then in others. 3 January 1935

*

Yesterday you wrote in regard to the Mother, "Experiencing what?" I meant experiencing what we feel. For sometimes we feel that our experiences are felt not only by us but by the Mother in us.

Naturally, the Mother does sadhana in each sadhak — only it is conditioned by their need and their receptivity.

Also I failed to understand your comment: "She has her own experiences in bringing down the things that have to be brought down."

I have said that the Divine does the sadhana first for the world and then gives what is brought down to others. There can be no sadhana without realisations and experiences. Both myself and the Mother have done sadhana. The *Prayers* are a record of Mother's experiences.

4 January 1935

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What you write is in itself unexceptionable — it is indeed what was offered to the sadhaks at the beginning — but the difficulty is precisely there, in the complete sincerity of the nature. Few have been able to rise to it and only a distant approximation (if the phrase can be accepted) has been attained by some. Apart from incomplete sincerity, there is the difficulty that the brain is clouded by egoism and desire and imagines it is doing the very thing when it is doing something else. That is why I spoke of the danger of the theory of all from the Mother. There are people who have taken it that all that comes from the ego or the vital, comes from the Mother, is her inspiration or what she has given them. There are others who have taken it as an excuse for going on in the old rut indefinitely, saying that when the Mother wants she will change things! There were even some who on this basis created a subjective Mother in themselves whose dictates, flattering to their ego and desire, they pitted against the contrary dictates of the Mother here and came to think that this external Mother was after all not so much the real thing as the inner one or that she was putting them through an ordeal by contradicting the inner dictates and seeing what they would do!! The truth remains the truth, but this power of twisting by the mind and other parts of the nature has to be kept in sight also.

17 October 1936

The Mother's Victory

I am confident that in the long run everything will be clear and there will be Mother's victory.

The Mother's victory is, essentially, the victory of each sadhak over himself. It can only be then that any external form of work can come to harmonious perfection. 12 November 1936

Being Taken Up by the Mother

When does the Divine take up the sadhaks fully?

When they give up the ego.

What is the meaning of "the Divine takes up" a sadhak?

When it is the Divine Force that works out all the Yoga and the actions by a direct action of which the sadhak is conscious.

When a person begins to do Yoga and comes to live under the shade of the Mother, is he not taken up fully by her?

Not until he is ready. He has first to accept her and then to give up more and more his ego. There are sadhaks who at every step revolt, oppose the Mother, contradict her will, criticise her decisions. How can she take them up fully in such conditions?

What is the sign that one is taken up by the Divine?

One can feel it.

21 June 1933

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My dear Mother, I have heard a good deal about your divine power and supernatural knowledge from X. As I myself am a humble servant of the Goddess, I would request you to instruct me in the development of supernatural force in order to attain the ultimate end — Darshan of the Goddess.

Reply¹ that the Mother is not able to write letters herself, and you are writing on her behalf. What is given by the Mother is not a development of supernatural force, but if someone is accepted to take up this path of Yoga he is led towards a deeper and higher consciousness in which he can attain union with the Divine Mother. This however is a path long and full of difficulties — Sri Aurobindo and the Mother do not admit anyone to it unless they are sure of his call and his capacity to follow it and the person himself is sure of his will to follow it until the goal is reached.

6 March 1937

Broad Lines of the Sadhana

The basis of life here is wholly spiritual. An inner discipline is given, but it is on broad lines allowing each individual the necessary freedom for his nature and temperament to grow and change spontaneously. Broadly, the sadhana consists of a progressive surrender of oneself — inward and based upon it the outward also — to the Guru, to the Divine; meditation, concentration, work, service — all these are means for a self-gathering in all one's movements with the sole aim of delivering oneself into the hands of a Higher Power for being worked on and led towards the Goal. The Mother guides, helps each according to his nature and need, and, where necessary, herself intervenes with her Power enabling the sadhak to withstand the rigours and demands of the Path. She has placed herself — with all the Love, Peace, Knowledge and Consciousness that she is — at the disposal of every aspiring soul that looks for help.

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All in me is proceeding towards the Mother's love, devotion and purity. Why then am I not going up in my consciousness and getting higher experience?

The power of experience is not gone — but what is most important now is to develop the psychic condition of surrender,

¹ Written by Sri Aurobindo to his secretary, who replied to the enquirer. — Ed.

devotion, love and cheerful confidence in the Mother, an unshaken faith and a constant inner closeness, and also to bring down from above the peace, wideness, purity etc. of the higher Self which is that of the Mother's consciousness. It is these things that are the basis of the siddhi in this Yoga — other experiences are only a help, not the basis.

17 January 1934

The Mother and Other Paths of Yoga

The idea of your friend that it is necessary to receive a mantra from here and for that he must come is altogether wrong. There is no mantra given in this Yoga. It is the opening of the consciousness to the Mother from within that is the true initiation and that can only come by aspiration and rejection of restlessness in the mind and vital. To come here is not the way to get it. Many come and get nothing or get their difficulties raised or even fall away from the Yoga. It is no use coming before one is ready, and he does not seem to be ready. Strong desire is not a proof of readiness. When he is inwardly ready, then there will be no difficulty about his coming.

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Before coming here I was attracted to the path of Nirvikalpa Samadhi, and sometimes it attracts me still. Occasionally I wonder if I will be able to follow this yoga through all its vicissitudes. I would like the Mother to tell me what I should do.

The Mother cannot decide for you, she can only offer to you the Truth she has come here to bring to the world and, if you accept it, guide you towards it.

9 September 1933

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Someone told me that Ramana Maharshi lives on the overmental plane or that his realisation is on the same level as Shankara's. How is it then that he is not aware of the arrival of the Divine, while others, for instance X's Guru, had this awareness?

I can't say on what plane the Maharshi is, but his method is that of Advaita Knowledge and Moksha — so there is no necessity for him to recognise the arrival of the Divine. X's Guru was a bhakta of the Divine Mother and believed in the dynamic side of existence, so it was quite natural for him to have the revelation of the coming of the Mother.

23 January 1936

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After reading a chapter in *The Synthesis of Yoga* I wrote to you the other day about the strong mental realisation of cosmic oneness; now I find that that state has disappeared. Was there anything wrong in writing about it? Is it that the Mother does not like this sort of Yoga of Knowledge? Or is it that one should always write about the darker side and never mention the other side?

Why should Mother dislike Yoga of Knowledge? The realisation of self and of the cosmic being (without which the realisation of self is incomplete) are essential steps in our Yoga; it is the end of other Yogas, but it is, as it were, the beginning of ours, that is to say, the point where its own characteristic realisation can commence. The disappearance of a realisation when it is spoken of is an experience some people have, but it is not likely to be the case with you. To write only of the dark side would be to overemphasise it and not to give a chance to the other. It is probable that the realisation comes only as a first touch; it comes often like that and afterwards repeats itself until the consciousness is able to hold it as its normal state.

26 March 1936

Turning Entirely to the Mother

All things are the Divine because the Divine is there, but hidden not manifest; when the mind goes out to things, it is not with the sense of the Divine in them, but for the appearances only which conceal the Divine. It is necessary therefore for you as a sadhak to turn entirely to the Mother in whom the Divine is manifest and not run after the appearances, the desire of which or the

interest in which prevents you from meeting the Divine. Once the being is consecrated, then it can see the Divine everywhere — and then it can include all things in the one consciousness without a separate interest or desire.

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Is it easily possible for my nature to terminate the remaining journey only with love, joy and happiness? I mean to say, can the transformation of my lower nature go on at the same time that the sadhana proceeds with full love?

It is possible if you (1) can get free of vital demand, (2) regard the difficulties of the nature calmly and dispassionately as if some defects of a machine that has to be set right, the being that uses the machine remaining fully dedicated to the Mother.

17 October 1935

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No, Mother was not serious or displeased with you at all. But why attach so much importance to what X or Y do or say. They are still so full of darkness and ego.

The path you have now taken — to cleave to the Mother through all circumstances and let nothing shake you from that — will bring the true solution of difficulties for you. For it means that the psychic being has started its work in you.

24 December 1935

Acceptance of the Mother

There seems to be a lack of harmony or unity of will between you and the Mother. What you write the Mother seems to contradict almost intuitively by exerting her weight on the opposite side.

On what grounds do you come to this conclusion? I do not write anything that is not approved by the Mother.

My physical is convinced that the right will has not descended

in the Mother. That is why she finds so many reasons not to support me. I think it is better for the present that I remain in retreat till the Will and love have descended in her, which would make her turn fully towards me.

Is it the opinion of your physical that the test of the right will in the Mother is that she must always support you? Does your physical think then that the infallible right will is necessarily in you—that it has descended in you first before it descends in the Mother? Otherwise, what is the basis of such a strange idea, that to disagree with you or suggest something else shows that her will is in the wrong and in error?

8 November 1932

*

I feel I have an inner relation with you, but I do not feel the same relation with the Mother. In all probability she has no place in my inner heart. Perhaps it is this consciousness in her that makes her act against the spirit of what she agrees to when you write things.

I again repeat that what I write is what the Mother approves or decides; we have not two separate wills. This idea of division or opposition between us is a suggestion of the Ignorance.

10 November 1932

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Even a good devotee and a brilliant student like X finds it difficult to accept Mother. I cannot understand why he cannot see the simple truth about her.

If he finds it difficult to accept Mother, how is he a good devotee? A devotee to whom? A brilliant student is another matter; one can be a brilliant student and yet quite incompetent in spiritual matters. If one is a devotee of Vishnu or some other godhead, then it is different—one may see only one's object of worship and so not be able to accept anything else.

14 November 1934

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Today is really a great day for me. What greater day can there

be than the one when the Mother is accepted even by the obscure, ignorant, revolting parts of my lower vital nature?

Yes, when that has been done, it is one of the biggest steps in the sadhana.

28 March 1935

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The Mother puts energy into all who can receive it; it depends on them whether they use it rightly or not—or waste it. Men are not machines, they have a will—and they can choose whether they accept the Divine or not—whether they do the Divine's will or not.

Confidence in the Mother

Have confidence in the Mother and be sure that the liberation from these things will surely come. What the soul feels is the sign of the spiritual destiny as of the spiritual need. What opposes is a remnant of the nature of the human ignorance. Our help will be there with you fully to overcome it.

27 February 1935

Recognising the Mother's Divinity

Up till now, I have not recognised the divinity of anyone except Sri Krishna. I have looked on the Mother as a Guru who can take me to him. But now something in me wants to hold the Mother fast as divinity. I can't keep her out of my mind, nor can I reject Sri Krishna. The more I think, the more I am perplexed. I pray for your help.

This struggle in you (between bhakti for Sri Krishna and the sense of the divinity of the Mother) is quite unnecessary; for the two things are one and go perfectly together. It is he who has brought you to the Mother and it is by adoration of her that you will realise him. He is here in the Asram and it is his work that is being done here.

2 March 1932

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This evening when I looked at the Mother, I found in her the utmost beauty. She was glimmering. I felt as if a great Goddess had come down from the heavens. Can I know what this was?

It was only that you felt the Divinity with her which is always there.

20 July 1933

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There are people who start at once, others take time.

X recognised the Mother as divine at first sight and has been happy ever afterwards; others who rank among Mother's devotees took years to discover or admit it, but they arrived all the same. There are people who had nothing but difficulties and revolts for the first five, six, seven or more years of the sadhana, yet the psychic ended by awaking. The time taken is a secondary matter: the one thing needful is — soon or late, easily or with difficulty — to get there.

circa 22 July 1935

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It seems X has climbed to the top rung of your spiritual ladder in a very short period. In your heavenly Parliament he must have been in charge of a very important portfolio! Otherwise I don't see how he could, at first sight, have had a vision of the Divine in the Mother, besides other things.

What top rung and what Parliament? There is no such thing as a heavenly parliament. X progressed smoothly and rapidly from the beginning in Yoga, first, because he was in dead earnest; secondly, because he had a clear and solid mind and a strong and tenacious will in complete control of the nerves; thirdly, because his vital being was calm, strong and solid; finally, and chiefly, because he had a complete faith and devotion to the Mother. As for seeing the Divine in the Mother at first sight, he is not the only one to do that. Plenty of people have done that who had no chance of any portfolios, e.g. Y's cousin, a Musulman girl, who as soon as she met her declared "This is not a woman, she is a goddess" and has been having significant dreams of her ever since and whenever she is in trouble, thinks of her and gets helped out of the trouble. It is not so damnably

difficult to see the Divine in the Mother as you make it out to be.

23 July 1935

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As for the Divine in the Mother, I know what the Musulman lady exactly saw. From what you say it seems to be a flash of intuition.

Not at all, it was a direct sense of the Godhead in her — for I suppose you mean by intuition a sort of idea that comes suddenly? That is what people usually understand by intuition. It was not that in her case nor in X's.

By seeing the Divine in the Mother, I don't mean imagination or calm, calculated reasoning. But to see actually the fully flaming, resplendent, effulgent Divine Mother in any one of her Powers — why, that is damnable difficult at least for me who have not even seen the halo around her.

I don't believe X or anybody would have that at first view. That can only come if one has already developed the faculty of vision in the occult planes. What is of more importance is the clear perception or intimate inner feeling or direct sense "This is She." I think you are inclined to be too romantic and poetic and too little spiritually realistic in these things. 29 July 1935

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I suppose you do not expect me to answer in detail this list of old grievances or try to justify the Mother or explain what you consider to be her indefensible conduct. I do not intend to do these things. It is for each sadhak to discover for himself whether he can take the Mother as divine or accept her government and guidance, or regards her as one like himself or inferior to himself, whose conduct he can see rightly, weigh, condemn and judge. It is not for the Mother to explain or justify herself, nor indeed was it ever the rule for the Guru to stand at the bar for the judgment of the disciple. Each has to see for himself whether he can give that obedience and self-opening to one who has or lives in the Divine Consciousness or has realised the Divine Truth, by which

alone he can receive what is to be given.

19 December 1936

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I do not have an active faith on every occasion that the Mother is divine or that her dealings with us are divine. How to have a firm conviction of this?

It is only if you see the divinity of the Mother that there can be a settled conviction — that is a question of the inner consciousness and vision.

5 June 1937

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It seems to me that the part of my external nature which was not accepting the Mother as divine is now being convinced of her divinity. But why do I forget her divinity when I actually come before her?

It is the physical mind in its most external action that sees physical things as only physical.

15 August 1937

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How to convince the mind that the Mother is the Divine and that her workings are not human?

It is by opening up the psychic and letting it rule the mind and vital that it can be done — because the psychic knows and can see what the mind cannot.

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Is there some doubting part in me, always doubting that the Mother is divine, or does something in me simply form for the enjoyment of doubt?

If something forms for the enjoyment of doubt and if that something is in you, then that part must surely be a doubting part. Or if these formations (which are always busily going about in the atmosphere) present themselves to you and something in you responds, it means that there is a part in you which is still open to the suggestions of doubt.

There is, I suppose, something in your vital and exterior mind which is still prone to the idea that the Mother cannot be divine because she does not satisfy their desires or act according to their ideas.

Discontent with the Mother

In your letter to the Mother I note that you profess to be writing a confession, but the tone of it is rather a justification of your faultless self accompanied by an accusation against the Mother of favouritism, bad temper, and injustice. I observe also that your statement of facts is incorrect and as far as it concerns the Mother, grotesque. You lay stress too on a point in which you can justify yourself, and you ignore all the rest in which you were in fault. I will assume, however, that all this was unintentional and that, in writing such a letter, you were unconscious of the movements of your vital being which inspired its spirit and tone.

I would suggest that in your relations with others,—which seem always to have been full of disharmony,—when incidents occur, it would be much better for you not to take the standpoint that you are all in the right and they are all in the wrong. It would be wiser to be fair and just in reflection, seeing where you have gone astray, and even laying stress on your own fault and not on theirs. This would probably lead to more harmony in your relations with others; at any rate, it would be more conducive to your inner progress, which is more important than to be the top-dog in a quarrel. Neither is it well to cherish a spirit of self-justification and self-righteousness and a wish to conceal either from yourself or from the Mother your faults or your errors.

As for your doubts about the Mother, they are not likely to disappear so long as you think you can read the Mother's mind by the light of your own and pass your mental judgments on her and her action from those erroneous data. Nor can they easily disappear if your faith breaks down every time that she does something which your limited intelligence cannot understand or which is displeasing to the feelings and demands of your vital nature. If you do not believe that she has a consciousness

greater and wider than yours and not measurable by ordinary standards and judgments, at the very least a Yogic consciousness, I do not see on what ground you are practising Yoga here under her guidance. Those who constantly doubt and criticise and blame or attribute her actions to the most common and vulgar human feelings and motives and yet pretend to accept her or to accept myself and my Yoga, are guilty of a stupid and irrational in consequence. As for understanding, that is another matter. I would suggest that you must grow out of the ordinary mind and become conscious with the true consciousness before you can hope to do it. And for that faith and surrender and fidelity and openness are conditions of some importance.

6 November 1929

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Are there sadhaks in the Asram who do not understand that “the Divinity acts according to the Consciousness of the Truth above and the Lila below and not according to men’s ideas about what it should or should not do”?

There are plenty who do not realise it — they expect the Mother to act according to their ideas and wishes, not according to a higher consciousness.

20 October 1934

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When the Mother pointed out my mistake, I became discontented. Misguided by the suggestions of the refractory parts of my being, I took it as an undeserved reproach. I feel very ashamed.

It was simply a statement of fact, not a reproach, and it was not you but your ego that got discontented because it felt scratched by the facts.

I had promised you that I would never be discontented with the Mother. I failed to keep that promise. I pray to you again to pull me out of this state and I promise again that I shall never be discontented with the Mother.

Very well, I take the promise. But the rising of discontent is surely a sufficient indication that the consciousness is going wrong. As soon as you feel it you should immediately draw back and say, "O ego, you are up again against the Mother! Stop that or I will take you by the scruff of the neck and throw you out of the window." I hope indeed to see that "thrown out" actually happen one day.

21 October 1935

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I have no intention of entering into an explanation, defence or apology for the Mother's action. I have long ago decided that I would not allow the Mother's rightful position here to be lowered by the sadhaks putting her as an accused before the tribunal of their ignorant mind or vital ego and demanding that she or I for her should plead her case. The Mother acts from her own knowledge and consciousness which is not that of the sadhaks; their ideas of what she ought to do or ought not to do have no place. Rather they are here to discard such ideas and accept her guidance by which they can themselves enter into a higher consciousness where these mental and vital errors have no right of existence.

I have already pointed out to you that your action was entirely mistaken. You had no right to ask for a letter placed there for the Mother's perusal. You had no right to demand that the Mother should give you the letter. You had no special claim to mend the envelope for X. It is not a question of bad or good desire. The pretension of doing good can contain as much ego and desire as any other personal claim, and that it was egoistic is proved by the violent reaction against the Mother that her not satisfying it raised in you. If it had been pure of ego, you would have had no reaction but quietly accepted the Mother's action as right because it was the Mother's.

If you want to get rid of the painful inner and physical reactions, you must get rid of their cause in you, the ego of self-esteem, demand and desire. It is only by a complete surrender of yourself, your mind, vital and everything else to the Divine that this ego can go. Your reaction and accusation of injustice against

the Mother shows that you are still clinging to it in some part of you and you should welcome rather than resent anything that gives you a chance of rejecting it still more from your nature.

7 March 1937

The Mother as Guru and Guide

The Mother's Way of Dealing with Sadhaks

The difficulty about meeting your demand that the Mother should plan out and fix a routine for you in everything which you must follow is that this is quite contrary to the Mother's way of working in most matters. In the most physical things you have to fix a programme in order to deal with time, otherwise all becomes a sea of confusion and haphazard. Fixed rules have also to be made for the management of material things so long as people are not sufficiently developed to deal with them in the right way without rules. But these things of which you write are different; they are concerned with your inner development, your sadhana. In fact, even in outward things the Mother does not plan with her mind and make a mental map and rule of what is to be done; she sees what is to be done in each case and organises and develops it according to the nature of each case. In matters of the inner development and the sadhana, it is still more impossible to map out a plan fixed in every detail and say, "Every time you shall step here, there, in this way, on that line and no other." Things would become so tied up and rigid that nothing could be done; there could be no true and effective movement.

If the Mother asked you to tell her everything, it was not in order that she might give you directions in every detail which you must obey. It was in order, first, that there might grow up the complete intimacy in which you would be entirely open to her, so that she might pour more and more and continuously and at every point the Divine Force into you which would increase the Light in you, perfect your action, deliver and develop your nature. It is this that was important; all else is secondary, important only so far as it helps this or hinders. In addition it would help her to give wherever needed the necessary touch, the necessary

direction, the necessary help or warning, not always by words, more often by a silent intervention and pressure. This is her way of dealing with those who are open to her; it is not necessary to give express orders at every moment and in every detail. Especially if the psychic consciousness is open and one lives fully in that, it gets the intimation at once and sees things clearly and receives the help, the intervention, the necessary direction or warning. That was what was happening to a great extent when your psychic consciousness was very active, but there was a vital part in which you were not open and which was coming up repeatedly, and it is this that has created the confusion and the trouble.

Everything depends on the inner condition and the outward action is only useful as a means and a help for expressing or confirming the inner condition and making it dynamic and effective. If you do or say a thing with the psychic uppermost or with the right inner touch, it will be effective; if you do or say the same thing out of the mind or the vital or with a wrong or mixed atmosphere, it may be quite ineffective. To do the right thing, in the right way in each case and at each moment one must be in the right consciousness — it can't be done by following a fixed mental rule which under some circumstances might fit in and under others might not fit in at all. A general principle can be laid down if it is in consonance with the Truth, but its application must be determined by the inner consciousness seeing at each step what is to be done or not done. If the psychic is uppermost, if the being is entirely turned towards the Mother and follows the psychic, this can be increasingly done.

All depends therefore not on a mental rule to follow in practice, but on getting the psychic consciousness back and putting its light into this vital part, and making that part turn wholly to the Mother. It is not that the question of your going too much to your sisters is of no importance, — it is of considerable importance — but to limit the contact is effective only as a means of helping your vital part to withdraw from this servitude to old movements. It is the same everywhere.

The kind of outward obedience you lay stress on, asking

for a direction in every detail, is not the essence of surrender, although obedience is the natural fruit and outward body of surrender. Surrender is from within, opening and giving mind, vital, physical, all to the Mother for her to take them as her own and recreate them in their true being which is a portion of the Divine; all the rest follows as a consequence. It would not then be necessary to ask her word and order outwardly in every detail; the being would feel and act according to her will; her sanction would be sought but as the seal of that inner unity, receptiveness of her will and obedience.

11 June 1932

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Your letter of the morning came entirely from the disturbed and wounded vital; that was why I was in no hurry to answer. I do not know why you are so ready to believe that myself or the Mother act from ordinary movements of anger, vexation or displeasure; there was nothing of the kind in what I wrote. You had been repeatedly falling from your attained level of a higher consciousness and, in spite of our suggestions to you to see what was pulling you down, your only reply was that you could see nothing. We knew perfectly well that it was part of the vital which did not want to change and, not wanting to change, was hiding itself from the mind and the mind itself did not seem very willing to see,—so we thought it necessary when you gave us a chance by what you wrote to indicate plainly and strongly the nature of the obstacle—on one side your old sentiment persisting in the *viparīta* form of anger, resentment and wounded feeling, on the other the vital's habit of self-esteem, censorious judgment of others, a sense of superiority in sadhana or in other respects, a wish to appear well before others and before yourself also. This especially has a blinding influence and prevents the clear examination of oneself and the perception of the obstacles that are interfering with the spiritual progress. Even if the mind aspires to know and change, a habit of that kind acting concealed in the vital is quite enough to stand in the way and prevent both the knowledge and the change. I was therefore careful to speak plainly of vanity and self-righteousness — so that this part of the

vital might not try not to see. The Mother speaks or writes much more pointedly and sharply to those whom she wishes to push rapidly on the way because they are capable of it and they do not resent or suffer but are glad of the pressure and the plainness, because they know by experience that it helps them to see their obstacles and change. If you wish to progress rapidly, you must get rid of this vital reaction of *abhimāna*, suffering, wounded feeling, seeking for arguments of self-justification, outcry against the touch that is intended to liberate,—for so long as you have these, it is difficult for us to deal openly and firmly with the obstacles created by the vital nature.

In regard to the difference between you and X, the Mother's warning to you against the undesirability of too much talk, loose chat and gossip, social self-dispersion was entirely meant and stands; when you indulge in these things, you throw yourself out into a very small and ignorant consciousness in which your vital defects get free play and this is likely to bring you out of what you have developed in your inner consciousness. That was why we said that if you felt a reaction against these things when you went to X's, it was a sign of (psychic) sensitiveness coming into you — into your vital and nervous being — and we meant that it was all for the good. But in dealing with others, in withdrawing from these things you should not allow any sense of superiority to creep in or force on them by your manner or spirit a sense of disapproval or condemnation or pressure on them to change. It is for your personal inward need that you draw back from these things, that is all. As for them what they do in these matters, right or wrong, is their affair — and ours; we will deal with them according to what we see as necessary and possible for them at the moment and for that purpose we can not only deal quite differently with different people, allowing for one what we forbid for another, but we may deal differently with the same person at different times, allowing or even encouraging today what we shall forbid tomorrow. X's case is quite different from yours, for there is no resemblance in your natures. I told you that or something like it long ago and I emphasised in my letter to X that what might be the rule for myself or Y was not to

be applied or going to be applied to his case. To deal otherwise would be to create difficulties in his sadhana and not to make it easier for him or swifter. I have also told him quite clearly in my letter that the attempt at meeting and mixing with others — which in the ordinary human life is attempted by sociableness and other contacts — has to be realised in Yoga on another plane of consciousness and without the lower mixture — for a higher unity with all on a spiritual and psychic basis. But the way, the time, the order of movements by which this is done, need not be the same for everybody. If he attempted to force himself it would lead to gloom, despondency and an artificial movement which would not be the true way to success. A human soul and nature cannot be dealt with by a set of mental rules applicable to everybody in the same way; if it were so, there would be no need of a Guru, each could set his chart of Yogic rules before him like the rules of Sandow's exercise and follow them till he became the perfect siddha!

I have said so much in order to let you understand why we do not deal in the same way with X as with you or another. The tendency to take what I lay down for one and apply it without discrimination to another is responsible for much misunderstanding. A general statement too, true in itself, cannot be applied to everyone alike or applied now and immediately without consideration of condition or circumstance or person or time. I may say generally that to bring down the supermind is my aim in the yoga or that to do that one has first to rise out of mind into overmind, but if on the strength of that, anybody and everybody began trying to pull down the supermind or force his way immediately out of mind into overmind, the result would be disaster.

Therefore concern yourself with your own progress and follow there the lead the Mother gives you. Leave X or others to do the same; the Mother is there to guide and help them according to their need and their nature. It does not in the least matter if the way she follows with him seems different or the opposite of that which she takes with you. That is the right one for him as this is the right one for you.

You have now begun to see the difficulties that are still there in your vital; keep to that clear perception, let it grow clearer and more precise. Concentrate on what you have to do and do not let yourself be distracted this way and that by irrelevant preoccupations or any other influence.

25 October 1932

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X would like to see the Mother and place his difficulties before her. His chief difficulty is how to reconcile the Bliss, Harmony and Unity (Sachchidananda) with the discord, strength and rapaciousness that one finds in the actual world.

You can tell him Mother does not discuss these mental problems even with the disciples. It is quite useless trying to reconcile these things with the intellect. For there are two things, the Ignorance from which the struggle and discord come and the secret Light, Unity, Bliss and Harmony. The intellect belongs to the Ignorance. It is only by getting into another consciousness that one can live in the Light and Bliss and Unity and not be touched by the outward discord and struggle. That change of consciousness therefore is the only thing that matters; to reconcile with the intellect would make no difference.

If he likes, you can lend him the *Conversations* — as he wants to converse with the Mother.

11 November 1932

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Does the Divine turn away its eyes from people like X, who disobeys the Mother, and allow them to do whatever they like?

That is the Mother's business. She alone can say what is the right way to deal with people. If she were to deal with people only according to their defects, there would be hardly half a dozen people left in the Asram.

26 March 1933

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I am sure there are reasons for everything the Mother does and that what she does is suited to the needs of each one, but the vital does not believe it, and it is not yet well established

in the mind. How can I make my vital being understand that the Mother is never partial?

One way is to have entire faith in the Mother—the other is to believe that she is wiser than yourself and must have reasons for everything she does which are better than your mind's judgments.

And how can this understanding be firmly established in my mind, so that it does not yield to any temptation?

It should be established—that is all. So long as the vital or mental think themselves wiser than the Mother and able to judge her how do you expect these stupidities to disappear?

22 March 1934

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The Mother's injunction to work in peace and harmony with the others concerned those whom you meet for work, not a personal relation such as you had with X.

The Mother is the sole judge of what is necessary for each and she is not bound to apply the same rule to everybody. The Guru deals with each disciple in a different way and does not keep one law for all. You were allowed to mix with X for a long time like Y with Z and A with B—in all cases it has been bad for those who do not give up the special relation, preventing them from being successful in the Yoga for which they came. The Mother does not interfere decisively for a time but only lets each know that it is better for them not to mix in a specially intimate way and she waits for them to realise it. When one or other of the two or both realises or begins to realise that it is better to break the special connection, then Mother intervenes. If you went back to X, all possibility of Yoga for you would cease. Even your going to the Dispensary has disturbed the progress you were making and brought back the old habits of thought and reactions.

Your one hope of doing anything in sadhana is really and truly and definitely to turn to the Mother alone and follow her

will. There is no going back to the old things — the Mother will not sanction it. If you are sincere in what you have written (in English), then you must also forget the past and live for the Divine and the sadhana.

10 April 1934

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Since the day my sadhana began to come down to the lower levels, some parts of my being have felt that the Mother has restricted the former physical manifestation of her love. But I am sure that this change was meant for the good of my sadhana.

Whatever is done by the Mother is for the good of the sadhak and the sadhana.

9 December 1935

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X wonders why people like Y are allowed here when it is obvious that they have no spiritual possibility in them. But unless X has some understanding of the higher manifestation, such comments are just expressions of his own ignorance.

Obviously. Neither Nature nor Destiny nor the Divine work in the mental way or by the law of the mind or according to its standards — that is why even to the scientist and the philosopher Nature, Destiny, the way of the Divine all seem a mystery. The Mother does not act by the mind, so to judge her action with the mind is futile. But why should X or anyone assume that Y will have no profit for her spiritual future from her stay here?

5 May 1936

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Can the physical mind have a correct understanding of the Mother's dealings?

Not until it is enlightened by the true consciousness and knowledge from above.

4 July 1936

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Why should the Mother be obliged to treat everybody in the same way? It would be a most imbecile thing for her to do that.

The Mahakali Method

All these things depend on the person, the condition, the circumstances. The Mother uses the method you speak of, the Mahakali method, (1) with those in whom there is a great eagerness to progress and a fundamental sincerity somewhere even in the vital, (2) with those whom she meets intimately and who, she knows, will not resent or misunderstand her severity or take it for a withdrawal of kindness or grace but will regard it as a true grace and a help to their sadhana. There are others who cannot bear this method—if it was continued they would run a thousand miles away in misunderstanding, revolt and despair. What the Mother wants is for people to have their full chance for their souls, be the method short and swift or long and tortuous. Each she must treat according to his nature.

9 May 1933

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All these years I have been hesitant to write all the details of my life for fear that the Mother will scold me. Now I have become a bit stronger and along with her scoldings I can feel her force working inside me. By her infinite compassion, I am out of the fear.

If you are afraid of the Mother's scoldings, how will you progress? Those who want to progress quickly, welcome even the blows of Mahakali because that pushes them more rapidly on the way.

28 September 1933

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Is it true that when I realise the Divine Consciousness there will be no difference between the Mother's will and mine? I would like her to tell me whatever her will is, even if it is unpalatable to me—not to say "If you like" or "As you like", but to say "Do this" or "Do not do this."

Certainly, when the Divine Consciousness is fully realised, there will be no difference between the Mother's will and the sadhaka's.

For a relation to exist in which Mother can do as you say, the

sadhak must not be afraid of the Mahakali aspect and ask only for sweetness. He must be able to take the blows of Mahakali as a blessing. He must also believe in her vision and judgment and word, otherwise when she says or does something unpleasant to his ego that ego will go sulking, justifying itself, calling her names etc. as is the habit with so many in the Asram when she does not do what they like. There are very few here who can take this attitude even imperfectly, but it is with them that the Mother has this relation. With others, who have a different nature, she cannot but behave differently—for she has to act with each according to his nature.

Understanding the Mother's Actions

During my talk with X, he spoke about Mother's preferences, about her taking more care of some and paying more attention to them. But it seems absurd and foolish to think that anybody knows more about people than Mother.

It is a favourite form of criticism and quite natural to the human mind which knows nothing about the play of forces through which the Divine Movement has to make its way under the conditions laid down by the play of the Ignorance.

7 May 1933

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I am often guilty of a feeling of ingratitude towards the Mother. I cannot find the way to remove the misunderstanding about her smile or her seeing some persons often or treating European sadhaks specially and other such things which indicate partiality. With reasoning it is easy to understand, but the feeling persists.

But why indulge a feeling which has not truth or good sense or reason at its back? This accusation of partiality rests first on feelings of egoistic vital demand, jealousy etc. which are no doubt fairly universal in human nature as it is, but not the more respectworthy for that. It supports itself on a crude idea of "equality" of treatment which in practice comes to this

that everyone should be treated in just the same way, which is about as impossible a thing as could be demanded in this world and would make all action and all direction of either work or sadhana impossible. The Mother extends the divine love and protection to all, but the form she gives to her action must vary with the different nature and need of each, the demands of the work, the necessities of their sadhana. The idea about Europeans is quite wrong — since with the exception of X and Y all those who see most of the Mother or are given special positions of confidence are Indians. If one starts comparisons each has something which another has not. And to have that something does not prevent complaints of being worse treated than others. These feelings therefore are merely the product of the restless discontent of the vital and there is nothing to be done with them except to send them away whenever they come as useless disturbers of happiness and progress.

27 December 1933

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Many sadhaks try to judge the Mother from her outer actions without some inner or higher basis.

Yes, that is the mistake all the sadhaks make. How can they understand the Mother's actions unless they are united in consciousness with the Mother, have in fact the same consciousness as hers?

6 April 1935

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I am uneasy about the treatment accorded to me by the Mother. Several times I have noted that she has acted against me. When I proposed something for Bushy the cat's treatment, she found some tricky replies and then asked X to treat her. When Y wanted to join our class, Mother told me she would try to find someone to replace him at work so he could attend, but then she wrote to him about the class, "It is not necessary." I have other examples also, and each one adds to the wounds she has dealt me. After all, what has she done for me since I came here? I have done my best, I have put the best of my

energy into the work, but not once can I remember that she has cared for me as she cares for others.

I do not know what right you have to invent false imputations against the Mother without even knowing all the facts out of your ignorant egoistic mind and insulting her with these falsehoods calling her a liar and a trickster. X treated Bushy without asking the Mother; she was not even informed and she only knew of it when she heard the poor beast screaming and asked what was the matter. That is how the sadhaks treat the Mother and afterwards they insult and kick her. As for Y, he had already asked and the Mother said no because he works in the night and she thought a class in addition would be too much strain for him. Afterwards when you wrote that he was enthusiastic about it she tried to find someone who would relieve him but she has found no one. That is all. Even when she tries to meet your requests, you seize on it as an occasion for insulting her and putting the most base, vile and sinister motives on her simplest actions. There is no reason for throwing the blame for your condition off your own shoulders and attacking the Mother.

11 January 1936

Misunderstanding the Mother's Words

Why does the Mother not speak directly to me and tell me what she wants? Does she not know that I truly want to do nothing but her will?

What the Mother said was perfectly just and reasonable. It is because your mind was confused and excited and hostile that it put its own imagined words and interpretations and tried to support and justify its hostility by its own inventions and inferences. This trick of putting into the Mother's mouth words that she had not spoken — often the very reverse of what she had said, — or of twisting her words and acts to mean something that she had never intended, is a constant habit of the forces of falsehood when they want to turn the sadhaks from the right way or use them against the Truth and against the Mother. If

you thus make yourself the instrument of a falsehood, how can you expect not to fall away from peace and light and the true psychic condition? You were constantly doing that before and it was the cause of all your troubles, putting yourself on the side of the obscure and false and hostile forces. If you want to get free, you must cease listening to them, justifying them, throwing them against the Mother.

We are perfectly ready to correct you and have no intention of leaving you to your ignorance,—that is another absurd imagination,—but you must also correct yourself as soon as your mind starts this kind of thing; for otherwise you will not be truly ready to receive the correction and will start again believing the Mother to be false and deceptive and the rest of it, as soon as the hostile forces can create or invent an excuse. 1 May 1932

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I find it rather surprising that you should regard what the Mother said to you or what I wrote as a recommendation to relax aspiration or postpone the idea of any kind of siddhi till the Greek Kalends! It was not so intended in the least—nor do I think either of us said or wrote anything which could justly bear such an interpretation. I said expressly that in the way of meditating of which we spoke, aspiration, prayer, concentration, intensity were a natural part of it; this way was put before you because our experience has been that those who take it go quicker and develop their sadhana, once they get fixed in it, much more easily as well as smoothly than by a distressed, doubtful and anxious straining with revulsions of despondency and turning away from hope and endeavour. We spoke of a steady opening to the Divine with a flow of the force doing its work in the adhar, a poised opening with a quiet mind and heart full of trust and the sunlight of confidence; where do you find that we said a helpless waiting must be your programme?

As for light-heartedness and insouciance, the Mother never spoke of insouciance — a light don't-care attitude is the last thing she would recommend to anybody. She spoke of cheerfulness,

and if she used the word light-hearted it was not in the sense of anything lightly or frivolously gay and careless — although a deeper and finer gaiety can have its place as one element of the Yogic character. What she meant was a glad equanimity even in the face of difficulties and there is nothing in that contrary to Yogic teaching or to her own practice. The vital nature on the surface (the depths of the true vital are different) is attached on the one side to a superficial mirth and enjoyment, on the other to sorrow and despair and gloom and tragedy, — for these are for it the cherished lights and shades of life; but a bright or wide and free peace or an *ānandamaya* intensity or, best, a fusing of both in one is the true poise of both the soul and the mind — and of the true vital also — in Yoga. It is perfectly possible for a quite human sadhak to get to such a poise, it is not necessary to be divine before one can attain it.

8 May 1932

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There is no doubt that at times the idea enters the thinking elements among the members of the Asram that the Mother has lost her grip on the physical, and thus she says things that are contradictory or not factual.

It is rather surprising that the Asram does not break down altogether, if the Mother has no grasp of the physical world — those who are in that lamentable condition are not usually able to run anything on the physical plane; but perhaps it is the great grip of the thinking elements here on the physical world that keeps the Asram going in spite of the imbecility of myself and the Mother. What I notice however is that when the Mother says something, the thinking elements very often understand the exact opposite.

You write of being responsive to the Mother. You seem to be saying: Don't concern yourself with whether something is true, whether it is a fact, whether it hurts you — always respond as the Mother leads.

It is not quite like that. Those who respond find on the contrary that the Mother has a greater grasp of truth than they have and

do not judge her by their fallible intellects but try to see that truth and follow it.

February 1933

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It is not X alone, but many or most who turn things [*spoken by the Mother*] in that way—the tendency is almost universal in human nature. It is not from dishonesty that he or others do it—it is because when they listen, their minds are not silent but active and the thought of their minds mixes with what they have heard and gives it another turn or shape or colour. Often also the vital interferes and exaggerates or reshapes according to the desire or the convenience. This is much more often unconsciously than consciously done.

In the present instance, the Mother spoke quite generally, not about Y or what had happened in Z's case, and she meant that what ought to be remembered is not remembered because of some strong immediate desire which pushes the memory behind until the desire is fulfilled and then only, if at all, the recollection comes. X evidently added his own ideas, applied it specially to Y's action and thought that the Mother had said it was consciously done—that Y remembered and yet went against her conscious sense of right in order to fulfil her desire. That was not what the Mother said or meant by her general statement.

30 March 1933

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Is it not the Mother who often tells us things indirectly, through the discriminating mind or the psychic?

It is only when the Mother speaks directly that you can say "The Mother has said".

9 July 1933

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It is good if you have freed yourself from this bondage [*a rigid insistence that one must always do what one has said one will do*]. Love of Truth is divine, but this kind of truth is a very mixed product accompanied as it is by hardness or a fierce anger. Truth does not insist on a blind adherence to the spoken word—as

for instance, if a man says that he will kill another under the impression that that other has done him a grievous wrong and afterwards carries out his word even when he has found out that the other was innocent and no wrong done. That is what literal adhesion to the spoken word would come to, if scrupulously held as a principle. Truth on the contrary demands that a man shall cleave to the principle of Truth in things only, and in the case above the principle of Truth would demand that he should break his vow and not keep it. If a man pledges himself to something that is against the principle of Truth, e.g. against the principle of Love and Compassion or against that of obedience and surrender to the Divine, it is not Truth to keep that pledge — for it would be a pledge to follow falsehood and how can truth be rooted in allegiance to falsehood? That would be an Asuric, not a divine Truthfulness.

As for the Mother, you will not find in her this blind adherence to an arrangement once made. If, for instance, she told someone, next time you yield to sex-passion in any way, you will have to leave the Asram and if the man did it and repented, she too might relent and not insist in following out her menace. These matters of interviews are not promises, contracts or engagements, — they are arrangements only and can be altered. If she has arranged for half an hour she can make it in fact $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour — or diminish it to twenty minutes. There is a plasticity needed in the movement of time and the Shakti of life cannot afford to be rigid in its movements; otherwise Life would either be turned into a mere mechanism or break to pieces. But in this case there was no intention; it was a pure accident; by some oversight your name had not been written in the morning list and Mother came to the door when those on the list were finished. She could not go back because it was extremely late and it had been a long and exhausting morning spent in a continual struggle with adverse forces and she had to come in, do what still she had to do and come to me to report what had happened.

But even if she had intended it for some reason not known to you, your reaction was not the right one. For the basis you have taken for your Yoga is to obey the Will whatever it may

be. These things, seemingly accidental, happen when they are predestined and they come in as an ordeal for something in the vital which has by this painful process to accept change.

28 September 1933

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The Mother told me in an interview one year ago that the psychic is quite strong in me. Did she say this to bring pride in me? It gave me a sense of superiority to persons like X and Y and many others. But now it would seem I am full of vital difficulties. Did the Mother ever look at the vital difficulties of others as severely as she seems to be looking at mine?

Mother told you about your psychic because she saw it—but she never told you that you were superior in that respect to X and Y. It was not said to bring pride in you, but to encourage you to rely on your psychic and bring it out so that it might get full control on the vital. I may add that the psychic being strong does not necessarily mean that it is in full control of the vital or cannot be clouded over. The condition some of those you mentioned have attained now is that the psychic is in control of the vital so that doubts and revolts are not possible or are rapidly rejected—and that was the condition to which you were coming before this (it seems to me quite causeless and accidental) lapse. So I wrote that there was no reason why you should not speedily have the same psychic consciousness which would prevent all doubt or any radical disturbance.

7 May 1934

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X has often quoted things that the Mother told him, not only about me but about others. He says that she tells him these private things because she trusts him so much. But so many things are said in the Mother's name! Often I have thought about how serious it is when someone says: "Mother said these things."

People have put thousands of things in the Mother's mouth that she never said. I have known them to say this and that to Mother and then go about putting it in Mother's mouth, saying "Mother

said to me." Also things that they have not said to her and she never said. You should put no reliance on these statements.

15 January 1935

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A lie is a lie whoever speaks it. If you give credit to what someone or another thinks or says as Mother's motive in an action, take her statement of her motive as untrue and somebody else's who cannot know as sound and true and on that challenge Mother for want of frankness, is the resulting upset our fault? It is a question of greater confidence in the Mother than in the statements or interpretations of sadhaks or the hasty assumptions or inferences of your mind or the feelings of your vital made without having the needed information. If you could get rid of that movement, things would be easier.

15 May 1936

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How can the maxim "a lie is a lie" apply to all? If a higher motive demands concealing or misrepresenting something by words, I would hardly call it a lie—the motive is superhuman and cannot fall in the same category as an ordinary lie. I think Krishna did not always speak the exact truth and his half-lies always provoke an understanding smile in all who listen to his stories.

If the Mother did a thing for one reason and said that she did it for quite another she did not have, I fail to see how it can be anything but a falsehood. No superhuman motive can make a falsehood not a falsehood. Moreover, if you really believe that the Divine can speak what is not true without being untrue and that that is a part of divinity, why do you resent it when you think the Mother has done it and grow sorrowful and indignant over her supposed unfair and uncandid treatment of you and say she ought to have been frank etc.? You ought rather to think she is acting from superhuman motives and accept gladly whatever she does. At least that seems to be the logic of such a position.

You base yourself evidently on the position that the Divine Consciousness is above good and evil. But that does not mean

that it does evil and good impartially. It can only mean that it acts from a light that is beyond that level of human consciousness which makes the human standard of these things. It acts for and from a greater good than the apparent good men follow after. It acts also according to a greater Truth than men conceive. It is for this reason that the human mind cannot understand the divine action and its motives — he must first rise into a higher consciousness and be in spiritual contact or union with the Divine. But if anyone recognises that, he can no longer judge the divine action with his human mind and from a human point of view. The two things would be quite incompatible.

But this does not fall under any such explanation. To allege a false motive cannot be a movement of a greater Truth and consciousness. To keep silence and not reveal one's motives is one thing — to say I did not act from that motive when I actually did so, is not silence, it is falsehood. It is a matter not of moral, but spiritual importance. The Mother cares for the Truth and she has always said that lying and falsehood create a serious obstacle to realisation. How then can she herself do that?

I do not remember any lies or half-lies told by Krishna, so I can say nothing on that point. But if he did according to the Mahabharat or the Bhagwat, we are not bound either by that record or by that example. I think Rama and Buddha told none.

17 May 1936

Asking Questions to the Mother

When I think about myself I begin to doubt whether I will ever get any realisation. I go on wishing the Mother would speak to me on this subject so that I may understand. But when I get the knowledge, I also feel that my wish was a way of not accepting the light.

Quite so.

Last night at the meditation, I got the same desire for knowledge. Then I saw the Mother closing her eyes and it was as though her mind was pressing my mind on all sides. Then my

mind became still and I felt the contact of the Mother's mind even in the cells. After that I felt that all my questions were answered and it was no use asking anything at all.

That is the right way. Union with the Mother's consciousness is the true way for knowledge to come.

But always I get this desire for knowledge and feel that it would be a great help if I could know some things.

You should throw away this feeling. It is not by asking questions to the Mother that you can get the knowledge, but by keeping your mind open to her.

25 June 1930

Writing to the Mother

On reading my letter of this morning, I felt as if the Mother was not pleased with me for writing about the bad thoughts I had about X and Y.

Your writing these things does not give any displeasure to Mother. It is better to write if you have them, than to be silent about it.

9 June 1933

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Today a thought came to me: "Why are you forcing yourself so much with regard to the control of the vital being? Better not bother about opening your thoughts and desires to the Mother; rather leave her to work on you."

If you want the Mother to work through you, you must lay before her your thoughts and desires and reject them.

3 September 1933

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You have asked why I stopped writing to the Mother. When I write I ask about the small things that bother me, but often she does not answer. This confuses me, because if she does not explain these things to me, who will?

When the sadhaks write to the Mother, it is not to get answers from her about the small things of daily life — sometimes they do it when necessary, and Mother sometimes answers, sometimes not. The main object of writing is to put themselves before the Mother, their experiences, their progress, their lives, so as to create a constant connection and invite her presence, force, help, guidance in everything that calls for her intervention. But it is not necessary that the Mother's response should take the form of a written answer. It would not even be physically possible in the course of 24 hours to answer all the correspondence that is addressed to us.

13 October 1933

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When the consciousness is open, to put things (difficulties, needs) before the Mother in a clear form written or otherwise (even if it is not submitted bodily to her), brings very often an immediate relief or response.

27 December 1933

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The experience of being with the Mother and speaking to her is one that one can easily have when one is writing to her and is true because some part of the being does actually meet with her and open itself to her when one writes one's experiences.

23 December 1935

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I find that when I start to write I feel a greater pressure and a deeper concentration on the higher Force.

I suppose it is because in the act of writing or rather beginning to write you enter into contact with the Mother and the Force.

5 May 1936

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You did well to speak to X and also to write to Mother. Of course Mother had observed X's difficulties, — it is correct that the difficulty is the lack of a certain free opening — otherwise all that could be removed quickly and the necessary change of

nature (mind, ego etc.) carried on by smooth gradations. To write as you do is helpful for opening oneself and for receiving the precise touch. X's logic about the Mother knowing and therefore there being no need to write is applicable if there is a free or at least a sufficient flow of giving and reception between the Mother and the sadhak, but when a serious difficulty comes, this logic is not so applicable. Naturally, we shall do our best to help him in his struggle.

14 May 1936

Leaving the Mother and the Ashram

If you were seeking for a way of making it impossible for me to refuse you the money for going away, you have certainly found it this time. After the letter you have written and the accusations it contains, I am bound to give you the Rs. 50 you ask for.

As to your other reproaches and accusations, I do not think it is necessary for me to reply. I send you the money you ask for and so fulfil the promise which you so imperatively demand that I should fulfil. I do not send you away or give my sanction for your going; it is for you to decide in all freedom whether you will go or stay. But if you stay, there must be no more reproaches of this kind, since you will be staying entirely by your own free will and under no pressure from us. Nor can I allow the claim you seem to have made that the Mother must do what you want and she must not say to you or do anything that does not please you. That is a relation which is not allowed to others and it cannot be allowed to you either. The Mother has shown you every possible favour and kindness; more she cannot do.

12 June 1930

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It is not possible for the Mother to tell you to remain, if you are yourself in your mind and vital eager to go. It is from within yourself that there must come the clear will on one side or the other.

24 February 1932

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My family would like me to go back with them to Bombay

and stay there for some time. I don't find myself bound by any sense of obligation, but there is a dull yet persistent desire in me to go. But as I am not a frigid mental machine, I would much prefer if the Mother spoke to me in a personal interview instead of replying in writing.

But you have already had a personal interview with the Mother in which the question was spoken of for an hour or thereabouts and she told you very positively that she considered it would be harmful, dangerous to you for your sadhana. She cannot say more or otherwise than she did that time. As for these dull persistent desires, it is not by indulging them that they disappear — on the contrary: the only way is to grow out of them or let them die.

7 February 1933

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Can sadhaks who leave the Mother totally forget her Grace after receiving it for so many years while living at her feet?

Some of them seem to forget.

Is there any possibility for them to return again to live at the Mother's feet?

It depends on the person.

How is it possible for someone who feels aspiration and the Divine call in his heart to come to live at the Mother's feet and then afterwards to leave them? Is it through vital depression or something else?

Through the suggestions of the hostile forces, because of pride, egoism, ambition, sexual desire, vanity, greed or any other vital impulse used by the hostile Powers.

Is it because the vital forces are so strong that even if a person has a clear aspiration and a Divine call they can lead him away from the Mother and the Asram?

Every man is free at every moment to consent to the Divine call

or not consent — to follow the lower nature or to follow his soul.

When a person leaves the path, does it not prove that he was unable to judge whether his call for the Divine was true or not?

All this about judging is nonsense — you feel the call or you do not and, if you feel the call, you follow it without calculating or counting risks or asking whether you are fit or not.

When people feel the urge to leave the Mother's feet and go away from her, what is the best way for them to cling to the Mother with faith and not go away?

By understanding that it is the Devil who tempts them and not listening to the Devil.

6 May 1933

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X had almost decided to go away this morning. He thinks the Mother is angry at him and putting pressure on him — and even the general pressure in the atmosphere he cannot bear.

The Mother is not at all angry with him and has not been at any time — that is a sheer imagination. As for the pressure, the only pressure now is to bring down the supramental, but that is a pressure on Nature and not on the sadhaks. For the sadhaks, the only thing given is help, not a pressure.

3 October 1934

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If you insist on going, the Mother cannot say no, as it is only with your own will that we can keep you here. Your difficulty only comes because you cannot recognise that whatever the Mother arranges for you is out of desire for your good and in love for you. This is because you have your own ideas and preferences and if she does something contrary to that you think she does not love you. The Mother's love is always there, but it is through confidence and surrender that you can feel it. You need to recover your health and strength and we wanted you to do

the necessary things for that for a sufficiently long time — food, rest, treatment with the Mother's force behind all that to make it successful. But a full confidence in the Mother and acceptance of her decisions and her guidance is necessary; if you have and keep that, then you can recover your strength and capacity for work and progress in Yoga.

3 December 1934

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The Mother cannot tell you to go because there is no true cause why you should go and it would be very bad for you to do so as well as bad for the work and everything else. The reasons for your not giving up the work are just the same as before and not in the least changed by anything that has happened. Jealousy is no doubt a great defect of the nature, but many here have it; almost everyone has some serious defect in his nature which stands in his way and gives trouble. But it is not a remedy for this to give up work and sadhana and abandon the Mother. You have to go on working and doing the sadhana with the Mother's aid behind you until this and all other obstacles are got rid of. We have told you already that these things cannot be got rid of in a day, but if you persevere and rely on the Mother they will yet disappear. Do not allow an adverse Force to mislead you; reject all depression and go straight forward till you reach the goal.

17 July 1935

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Mother has no wish to abandon you and it has never been her will that you should go away from her. You must put yourself in harmony with her will and then all will go right. Her love will guide you and her protection will be effective.

Rest until you are well. Do not be in a hurry to go to work before you have recovered your strength.

19 July 1935

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What you have seen is quite correct. When the psychic being has been once fully awake as it was all these days in you, then it is not possible for the sadhak to revolt and go away; for if

he does, he leaves his soul behind him with the Mother and it is only the outer being that lives for a while elsewhere. But that is too painful a condition; one has either to come back or life becomes hardly worth living. But there is no danger of that for you, now you have understood and have the true feeling.

Moreover these attacks that now come are not like those that came before when the psychic was still not fully awake. Then each time they came, they increased their force of attack; now they are only spending what force is left to them and losing it. Besides once the psychic being is awake, it is bound to recover control and confirm the mind in the truth so that the true consciousness in the being becomes each time stronger.

All is well. The Mother's child will always grow more in you and the Mother's little star burn brighter and brighter.

20 November 1935

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It is a question between the continuity of your concentrated spiritual life and the call of old demands belonging to the consciousness that you have left behind you. The Mother, as you well know, does not favour even a brief return to the old atmosphere once one is in the spiritual life. For one who has not yet really begun or is living as yet only a tepid half-formed surface sadhana, it might be different. The old life always pulls to have the sadhak back, to renew its ties, to get a fresh lease of control over his vital. If one yields it will redouble its importunities, bring new occasions for calling again; the sadhana here gets broken and has to be picked up again with effort. All the same if people insist on going or have a strong desire to go, they are allowed sometimes to do so at their own risk, but the Mother never sends anybody — unless there is her work to do. That is the position.

15 January 1937

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As for going out, the Asram has seen X go out twice and return with full permission, it has recently seen Y and Z go with the Mother's permission, both with the full intention of returning

—to say nothing of others. As for A you yourself were entirely against her going. A herself always took the position that she ought not to go and asked for help against the other tendency in her. If she had decided to go and told us so, nobody would have stood in her way, although we would not have been lost in admiration at the spiritual wisdom of her choice. Our view is that once the full separate spiritual life is chosen, to cling and turn back to the ordinary one is an error. But if there are circumstances that make the (temporary) departure either harmless or psychologically or otherwise inevitable then we give permission. If the sadhak goes in a spirit of revolt and defiance or goes back to the ordinary life out of egoistic ambition as B and others did then of course Mother does not wish them to come back (so long as that remains) and refuses to allow it. Also if there is treachery, as in C's case — a fact which you yourself asserted and I don't see that it can be denied — unless he atoned or changed, there was no reason why he should return, especially as he said his sadhana was going on admirably there. Mother knew his return with an uncorrected spirit would not be good for him and events showed that she was perfectly right. But I have always noticed that whatever untoward thing happens to a sadhak, many consider that it is we whose bad qualities are to blame for it. And yet they go on accepting us as Gurus and addressing us as Divine! That is truly baffling to the reason. Perhaps it shows that there is something really supramental here!!

In your case I have given the reasons why we accept your going out. There is no ground therefore why we should not support you in your music and other undertakings there. In these respects at least you allow that you have been supported and the support has been effective — there is no reason why that shall not continue — the more so if you keep us informed as others at a distance do when they want some help in any endeavour.

9 March 1937

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You have been able to make progress because you had a certain freedom from demand and repining, an equability and

confidence in turning towards the Mother. This is your main strength and you must not allow it to be disturbed or taken away from you. The attitude described in the birthday poem is the right one for you. It is because you have opened and are on the way that the opposite forces are trying to put in suggestions of dissatisfaction or the impulse to go away. They want to create the same "habit of depression and trouble" that there has been in X and many others so as to use it as a lever against you; but there is no reason why you should allow it. The idea that we are driving away and will drive many by the pressure of our Yoga force is a silly notion among the many silly notions current in the Asram invented by the too idly active brains of the sadhaks. We do not press on anybody to go away—our action has been the opposite. It is a contrary undivine Force which presses on sadhaks to go away from here so that they may lose their chances of sadhana. If their vital is very unquiet, they accept the suggestions of this Force and begin to long to go away; if they long too much, we may have to let them go, for it is not possible to force the Divine on those who do not want him or are not willing to follow the path to the end or decide that sex, fame, pleasure or other things of the kind are preferable.

31 March 1937

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The Mother certainly would not give you money for going away, for she could not approve of or sanction such a step which has no real ground and for which the only reasons you allege are a quite unreasonable despondency and a pique (*abhimāna*) which is also without true cause. The Mother has not in the least changed towards you—she has neither withdrawn her affection nor felt nor expressed any disappointment about your sadhana; her support has not been withdrawn either from your singing. The only thing we can make out in this connection is that the impression was created in your vital by her having discouraged a movement of ego in you, pressed on the removal of some defects which you yourself had admitted and wished to overcome, put aside some suggestions with regard to one

occasion for your music which did not seem to her suitable. But these things she has done before and you used to be very much pleased at her pointing out or letting you understand where you had to change. You yourself wanted to get rid of ego and change the resistant part and had taken steps towards it; it would not have been helpful for your purpose that the Mother should support or indulge any movements coming from there. I can only gather from your recent letters that the resisting part has revolted against the pressure you yourself had put on it and thrown up the impression that it could not change, that the demand on it was more than it could face and it would rather go and that in your depression you have identified yourself with its feeling and misinterpreted the Mother's motives and her attitude — a thing that in your clearer consciousness you would either not have done or else soon corrected the mistake. I hope that this clearer part of you which is the larger part will quickly reassert itself and give you back your former right vision and attitude. I shall do and do always what I can to help towards that and towards the psychic victory in you and your spiritual progress. Your departure and renunciation of the sadhana is a thing which nothing in us accepts for a moment.

The Mother and the Discipline in the Ashram

The Mother in Sole Charge of the Ashram

What your vital being seems to have kept all along is the “bargain” or the “mess” attitude in these matters. One gives some kind of commodity which he calls devotion or surrender and in return the Mother is under obligation to supply satisfaction for all demands and desires spiritual, mental, vital and physical, and, if she falls short in her task, she has broken her contract. The Asram is a sort of communal hotel or mess, the Mother is the hotel-keeper or mess-manager. One gives what one can or chooses to give, or it may be nothing at all except the aforesaid commodity; in return the palate, the stomach and all the physical demands have to be satisfied to the full; if not, one has every right to keep one’s money and to abuse the defaulting hotel-keeper or mess-manager. This attitude has nothing whatever to do with sadhana or Yoga and I absolutely repudiate the right of anyone to impose it as a basis for my work or for the life of the Asram.

There are only two possible foundations for the material life here. One is that one is a member of an Asram founded on the principle of self-giving and surrender. One belongs to the Divine and all one has belongs to the Divine; in giving one gives not what is one’s own but what already belongs to the Divine. There is no question of payment or return, no bargain, no room for demand and desire. The Mother is in sole charge and arranges things as best they can be arranged within the means at her disposal and the capacities of her instruments. She is under no obligation to act according to the mental standards or vital desires and claims of the sadhaks; she is not obliged to use a democratic equality in her dealings with them. She is free to deal with each according to what she sees to be his true need or what is best for him in his spiritual progress. No one can be her judge or impose on her his own rule and standard; she

alone can make rules, and she can depart from them too if she thinks fit, but no one can demand that she shall do so. Personal demands and desires cannot be imposed on her. If anyone has what he finds to be a real need or a suggestion to make which is within the province assigned to him, he can do so; but if she gives no sanction, he must remain satisfied and drop the matter. This is the spiritual discipline of which the one who represents or embodies the Divine Truth is the centre. Either she is that and all this is the plain common sense of the matter; or she is not and then no one need stay here. Each can go his own way and there is no Asram and no Yoga.

If on the other hand one is not ready to be a member of the Asram or bear the discipline and is still admitted to some place in the Yoga, he remains apart and meets his own expenses. There is no discipline for him on the material plane, except the rules necessary for the safety of the work; there is no material responsibility for the Mother.

11 April 1930

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The Mother is not bound to give reasons for any change she makes unless she herself thinks fit to do so. In such cases the sadhak is supposed to accept the change without question in the confidence that the Mother has her reasons and if she does not tell them to me it is because I do not need to know.

15 June 1936

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If anyone questions the right of the Mother to control the Asram or to control his own conduct, his place is outside; there he can exercise his full civic or other rights and do what he pleases. Whoever is dissatisfied, has the right to leave the Asram just as the Mother has the right not to maintain in it anyone whose conduct or attitude she finds unsatisfactory. There is no right civic or legal or republican or constitutional or any other entitling anyone to do whatever he likes in the house of another or debars that other from objecting or enforcing his objection. There is a discipline of obedience and of abstention from forbidden acts in

this Asram and whoever refuses to recognise it has no “right” to remain here.

There are certain phrases in your recent letters that might be taken as an intention of refusing control and doing what you had been told you must not do so long as you are here and a suggestion that you do not mind leaving the Asram on that account. The phrases you used were indeed vague and general, but if anything of that kind was intended it will be better if you make it clear and precise.

4 May 1937

Demands on the Mother's Time

The Mother has no time at all. Can't some arrangement be made so that she may have time for rest? If we rest, why not her also?

I wish it could be so arranged; but it seems difficult. 1933

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It is not because your French is full of mistakes that Mother does not correct it, but because I will not allow her to take more work on herself so far as I can help it. Already she has no time to rest sufficiently at night and most of the night is working at the books and reports and letters that pour on her in masses. Even so she cannot finish in time in the morning. If she has to correct all the letters of the people who have just begun writing in French as well as the others, it means another hour or two of work — she will be able to finish only at 9 in the morning and come down at 10.30. I am therefore trying to stop it. 1933

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Mother prefers that when she walks on the terrace people should not be looking at her because it is the only time when she can concentrate a little on herself — apart from the necessity of taking some fresh air and movement for the health of the body. If she has to attend to the pull of so many people, that cannot be done. The interview she gives you is a different matter; she has so arranged it herself and it is part of her work, so there is no

need to change. What was said was only for the walk on the terrace.

1935

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Mother never avoids opening letters or any other work because of absence of time: she deals with all the work that comes to her even if she is ill or if she has no time for rest. 15 February 1936

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I am always committing mistakes, and Mother is always merciful and forgives me. But then why has she not written to me about my problem?

You know that I have had to stop correspondence. Mother cannot take it up or write regular letters as she is already engaged in one activity or another from morning to night, 18 hours out of the 24.

1 February 1938

The Mother and Material Things

The Mother had arranged for the good order of the distribution of dishes and their return. X was to arrange for all necessary facilities demanded by Y, Y was to be responsible for the good order of the work, and for that he was to have full control; for if he has not full control, he cannot be held responsible and good order becomes impossible. All who are concerned with this work ought to report everything that is necessary to report to Y and help him to control this work; but it seems that no one is willing to do according to the Mother's arrangement and orders and each wants to be a law to himself. In that case there is no use in making complaints about insufficient dishes or anything else of the kind to the Mother. We refuse to issue more dishes under the present conditions. Already in a single year more than 250 items belonging to the dining-room have been broken, lost, stolen, taken away without authorisation by the sadhaks for their private use or have otherwise vanished. Indiscipline, carelessness, regard for one's own convenience only, disobedience to rules, utter disregard for economy or proper use or safeguarding

of the property of the Asram are responsible for this result. It is no use any farther protecting the sadhaks against the results of their own wilful disorders or providing them with means of life which they show no will or fitness to use rightly. They must go on as best they can with what is there, sufficient or insufficient, so long as it lasts.

I do not know what you mean by these phrases about jumping into disorder or all being the Mother's children. The Mother gives no sanction to disorder, and it is idle for the sadhaks to sentimentalise about being children of the Mother and at the same time constantly to disregard and disobey her.

3 February 1932

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X of the Washing Department has resolved not to speak while working there and to handle the dishes and bowls very carefully so they do not dash against each other. If they are carelessly tossed about, he says, they may feel bad due to the lack of care, grow restless and be more likely to slip and break.

It is very true that physical things have a consciousness within them which feels and responds to care and is sensitive to careless touch and rough handling. To know or feel that and learn to be careful of them is a great progress in consciousness. It is so always that the Mother has felt and dealt with physical things and they remain with her much longer and in a better condition than with others and give their full use.

15 April 1936

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I did not consider it necessary to say anything about the question of waste beyond assuring you that the undertaking of useless and unnecessary work only in order to keep the men employed was no part of the Mother's principle of action. The Mother did not know to what pipe you referred and had no time or inclination to make enquiries about it. It is quite true that, so long at least as the sadhaks are not siddha Yogis, self-control is the law; they have to learn to refrain from indulgence of excess in any direction — the provision made for them being ample for

a sadhak and much more than is allowed elsewhere — and from negligence, greed or the pursuit of individual fancy. When they do these things, the Mother does not intervene at every moment to check them; a standard has been set, they have been warned against waste, a framework has been created, for the rest they are expected to learn and grow out of their weaknesses by their own consciousness and will with the Mother's inner force to aid them. In the organisation of work there was formerly a formidable waste due to the workers and sadhaks following their own fancy almost entirely without respect for the Mother's will; that was largely checked by reorganisation. But waste to a certain extent continues and is almost inevitable so long as the sadhaks and workers are imperfect in their will and consciousness, do not follow in spirit or detail the Mother's recommendations or think themselves wiser than herself and make undue room for their "independent" ideas. Here too the Mother does not always insist, she watches and observes, intervenes outwardly more than in the individual lives of the sadhaks, but still leaves room for them to grow by consciousness and experience and the lesson of their own mistakes and often employs an inner in preference to an outer pressure. In these matters she must exercise her own judgment and vision and there is no use in anybody offering his approval or censure — for she works from a different centre of vision than theirs and they have not a superior light by which they can judge or guide her.

As regards waste, I must point out that in our view free expenditure is not always waste, to have a higher standard than is current in this very tamasic and backward place is not necessarily waste. In matters of building and maintenance of buildings as in others of the same order the Mother has from the beginning set up a standard which is not that current here — the usual system being to use the cheapest possible materials, the cheapest labour and to disregard appearance, allowing things to go shabby or making only patchwork to keep them up. I suppose "thrifty" minds would consider the local principle to be sound and a higher standard to be waste. If the higher standard has been kept, it is not for the glory of anyone, the Asram or the

Mother — the principle of glory being foreign to Yoga, but from another point of view which is not mental and can only be fully appreciated when the consciousness is capable of understanding the vision of things with which the Mother started her work. I do not consider it useful to write about that now, — the general misunderstanding in these subjects can only disappear when the sadhaks have got rid of the ordinary mind and vital and are able to look at things from the same vision level as that from which the conception of the Yoga and the work took its rise.

As to doubts and argumentative answer to them I have long given up the practice as I found it perfectly useless. Yoga is not a field for intellectual argument or dissertation. It is not by the exercise of the logical or the debating mind that one can arrive at a true understanding of Yoga or follow it. A doubting spirit, "honest doubt" and the claim that the intellect shall be satisfied and be made the judge on every point is all very well in the field of mental action outside. But Yoga is not a mental field, the consciousness which has to be established is not a mental, logical or debating consciousness — it is even laid down by Yoga that unless and until the mind is stilled including the intellectual or logical mind and opens itself in quietude or silence to a higher and deeper consciousness, vision and knowledge, sadhana cannot reach its goal. For the same reason an unquestioning openness to the Guru is demanded in the Indian spiritual tradition; as for blame, criticism and attack on the Guru, it was considered reprehensible and the surest possible obstacle to sadhana.

If the spirit of doubt could be overcome by meeting it with arguments, there might be something in the demand for its removal by satisfaction through logic. But the spirit of doubt doubts for its own sake, for the sake of doubt; it simply uses the mind as its instrument for its particular dharma and this not the least when that mind thinks it is seeking sincerely for a solution of its honest and irrepressible doubts. Mental positions always differ, moreover, and it is well known that people can argue for ever without one convincing the other. To go on perpetually answering persistent and always recurring doubts such as for long have filled this Asram and obstructed the sadhana, is merely to

frustrate the aim of the Yoga and go against its central principle with no spiritual or other gain whatever. If anybody gets over his fundamental doubts, it is by the growth of the psychic in him or by an enlargement of his consciousness, not otherwise. Questions which arise from the spirit of enquiry, not aggressive or self-assertive, but as a part of a hunger for knowledge can be answered, but the “spirit of doubt” is insatiable and unappeasable.

For the same reason I refuse to answer criticisms, attacks and questionings directed against the Mother. Whether in work or in Yoga, the Mother acts not from the mind or from the level of consciousness from which these criticisms arise but from quite another vision and consciousness. It is perfectly useless therefore and it is inconsistent with the position she ought to occupy to accept the ordinary mind and consciousness as judge and tribunal and allow her to appear before it and defend her. Such a procedure is itself illogical and inconsequent and can lead nowhere; it can only create or prolong a false atmosphere wholly inimical to success in the sadhana. For that reason if these doubts are raised, I no longer answer them or answer in such a way as to discourage a repetition of any such challenge. If people want to understand why the Mother does things, let them get into the same inner consciousness from which she sees and acts. As to what she is, that also can only be seen either with the eye of faith or of a deeper vision. That too is the reason why we keep here people who have not yet acquired the necessary faith or vision; we leave them to acquire it from within as they will do if their will of sadhana is sincere.

I have written at length on this question once for all; I do not propose to repeat it. People no longer expect it from me; even those who did expect it formerly have ceased to do so. On other questions, so far as they are not connected or mixed up with these things, I may answer hereafter as I find time.

26 December 1936

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The Mother does not provide the sadhaks with comforts because she thinks that their desires, fancies, likings, preferences should

be satisfied—in Yoga people have to overcome these things. In any other Asram they would not get one tenth of what they get here, they would have to put up with all possible discomforts, privations, hard and rigorous austerities, and if they complained, they would be told they were not fit for Yoga. If there is a different rule here, it is not because the desires have to be indulged, but because they have to be overcome in the presence of the objects of desire and not in their absence. The first rule of Yoga is that the sadhak must be content with what comes to him, much or little; if things are there, he must be able to use them without attachment or desire; if they are not he must be indifferent to their absence.

7 January 1937

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I pray to the Mother to enable me to offer myself body, soul and mind to her. I do not want to have anything which I may call my own. I would therefore like to give all my material belongings to her and use only what comes from her. She may give me the same things for my use but please let her accept them at least once as an offering. To whom should I hand over all these things?

Once you have made the offering in your mind and regard all you have as belonging to the Mother and given to you by her, this outward act is not necessary. If you feel that you must do it, you can give them to Nolini and Mother will give them back to you for your use.

2 September 1938

The Mother and the Vital Difficulties of the Sadhaks

It is now one month since you wrote your letter announcing the new favourable turn in your sadhana. You will have had time to see whether the turn was decisive and how far it has moved towards completeness. The test will be whether it gets rid fundamentally of the Asuric turn in your external being. All ambition, pride and vanity must disappear from the thoughts and the feelings. There must be no seeking now or in the future for place, position or prestige, no stipulation for a high seat

among the elect, no demand for a special closeness to the Mother, no claim or assertion of right, no attempt to thrust yourself between her and others, no endeavour to intercept what she is giving to them or to share in it, no imposing of yourself on her or on other sadhaks. All falsehood must be rejected from the speech, thought and action and all ostentation, arrogance and insolence. A simple, quiet and unpretending aspiration to the Truth and reception of it for its own sake and not for any profit it may bring you, a straightforward acceptance of the Mother's will whatever it may be, a complete casting away of all pretensions and pretences, a readiness to obey completely and without reserve and to accept any position and any discipline given are the only conditions on which a divine change can be effected in you. It is for this that you must strive.

On our side we await a certain conquest on the material plane which is not yet accomplished, before we can tell you to return. As you yourself saw once, till this is done your stay here would not be helpful to you. When you are ready in your inner condition and things are ready here, then the Mother will call you.

4 October 1927

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In meditation with the Mother today, I felt devotion for Sri Aurobindo, not in the mind but in the heart. The mind and body are at peace, but there is still difficulty in the vital and below. Take this difficulty away from me.

If the mind and the heart have a settled devotion and are full of the Mother's presence or in constant contact with her Light and Force, then the difficulties of the vital and physical consciousness in you can be met and conquered. It is that you must get first. To try to deal with the difficulties of the vital without this contact or presence, is premature and cannot succeed. 20 June 1930

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Instead of opening myself to the Mother, I opened to the adverse forces. Then like a friend the Mother showed me my mistakes. But why does my outer nature make me wander

here and there? Why doesn't the Mother protect me with her Force at the time of difficulty? Why does she show me only afterwards what the problem was?

The vital will always find excuses for leaving the straight path and indulging its own propensities—and it is for you, since you have a consciousness and a will, not to listen to what you know to be a lower movement. When you want to be guided externally, you have to put your difficulty clearly and precisely without concealing anything before the Mother. But we cannot at every moment replace your own choice and will—we give you the necessary consciousness and light, it is for you to walk by that.

11 January 1933

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I am glad to see that the right consciousness is returning and the attack is over. As it is past, I need not say anything about what you wrote in the interval since you can with the sight of the true consciousness see for yourself what is the right answer.

Only one thing I must note that no wrong idea may linger in your understanding. You seem to say in one passage of a letter that the Mother had said to you that jealousy is inevitable in true love (in ordinary life) and if it is not there when one sees the other loving elsewhere, then they don't love each other! You must have strangely misheard and misunderstood the Mother. It is just the opposite of what the Mother has always said and thought and the very contrary of all her knowledge and experience. It is the idea of the ordinary mind about jealousy and love, not hers. She remembers very well having told you just the opposite that, even in ordinary life, one is *not* jealous if one has the true love. Jealousy is the common movement of the human egoistic lower vital with its grasping possessive instinct and it cannot be anything else. I thought it better to make this clear so that there might be no misleading impression that such movements of the lower vital nature have any sanction or support in the truth of the soul; they belong to the vital Ignorance, they are fruits of the vital ego.

1 February 1933

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Sometimes I throw away the vegetables or the milk because I don't like to eat them. Why does Mother give us the same food every day in the dining room and not something new — some sweets?

That is the desire of the palate which the sadhak has to conquer.

Sometimes I want to wear nice clothes — my dissatisfaction persists unabated.

Another vital desire. These things are good for people in the ordinary life, but such desires must be overcome in Yoga.

There is a growing disgust with life and a preference for death. I pray to Yamaraja to take me quickly since I don't think I can do anything for Mother in this body — why then live on?

This is the reaction of disappointed desire in the vital. It is a movement that should be rejected completely whenever it comes.

Why do these things arise?

They are brought by the ordinary human nature as obstacles to the sadhana.

Who has put them in me and why? How can I get rid of these disappointing things?

You must reject them when they come and try to replace them by a complete faith and surrender to the will of the Mother and a quiet and very patient aspiration for opening and inner union with her.

I still have a fear of the Mother. Why?

It is the same part of you, the vital, that is afraid of her.

It seems like someone has taken away my life-energy and I am without any strength.

It is the physical consciousness which has no longer the mind's sanction to the old push of vital activity and vital desire and so feels the absence of the rajasic vital strength in which men live. In Yoga that strength must be replaced by the Divine Force that comes from the Mother.

15 May 1935

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We are very glad to hear that you are better and that X has helped you out of the crisis. Surely this jealousy must go and no trace of it remain. Do not doubt that the Mother's love is and will be always with you. Trust in her grace and all this will go out of you and leave you the true child of the Mother which in your mind and heart you always are.

18 July 1935

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This jealousy (which is a very common affliction of the vital) will go like the rest. If you have the aspiration to get rid of it, it can only come by force of habit, and with the psychic growing in you and the Mother's force acting the power of the habit is sure to diminish and fade away. Do not be discouraged by its occasional return, but reject it so that it may be unable to stay long and will be obliged to retire. Very soon then it will cease to come at all.

17 October 1935

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You allowed yourself to be surprised by the old movement of unreasoning jealousy and it brought back the old unreasoned thoughts and feelings — for you are no more than others here as a mere worker, you are here as the Mother's child and the work is there only because it is a part of the sadhana. Also this feeling of jealousy and other doubts and difficulties are not peculiar to you alone, they are common to human nature and most here have them or have had them and found it difficult to be free. So there is no reason to suppose because of their presence that you are unfit or will not be able to do the sadhana. The only danger is in these violent fits of despondency and the movement to go away that comes with them; but that also others have

had who have now got over them and some still have them. There is no reason why you should not get over them as many others have done. The Mother's love and the Mother's grace are with you. The only other thing needed is the growth of the psychic consciousness and the psychic movement within you. That had begun and was fast increasing; it has only to reach a certain point, to occupy the mind and vital consciousness more strongly, then these things will no longer be able to return. What difficulties remain will then be minor things; there will be nothing that will try to take you away from the Mother. Be patient therefore and persevere; recover your confidence in the Mother and let your soul grow in you. Beyond these storms there is a haven of joy and love and happiness that are your true goal. Persevere till you reach it.

25 October 1935

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All faults and errors are redeemed by repentance. Confidence in the Mother, self-giving to the Mother, these if you increase them will bring the change in the nature.

12 November 1935

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If you have difficulties, you should recognise that they come from your own vital and deal straightforwardly with your vital; it is only so that real fitness in the nature (apart from the original psychic urge which can only realise itself through a change of the nature) can come. To have feelings against the Mother because of difficulties created by your own vital is simply one way out of many the vital has of rejecting its responsibility and so resisting the pressure to change.

6 February 1936

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The human vital everywhere, in the Asram also, is full of unruly and violent forces — anger, pride, jealousy, desire to dominate, selfishness, insistence on one's own will, ideas, preferences, indiscipline — and it is these things that are the cause of the disorder and difficulty in the D. R. [Dining Room] and elsewhere also in the Asram work. The rule established in order to control

or combat these tendencies is that the Mother's will and the rule and discipline established by her shall be followed and not each worker be led by his own ego. But there are many who insist on their own ego and resent discipline. They are ready to follow the Mother's will and rule and discipline only in name and so far as it agrees with their own ideas and preferences. There is no cure for this except by an inner change. In outside life discipline is enforced because refusal of discipline is visited by severe penalties or else results in so much discomfort of various kinds that the indisciplined man has either to submit or to go. But here in the Asram it is not possible to enforce the rule in this way. An inner obedience has to be given as the source of the outer obedience. The only remedy is the descent into the consciousness of that golden lotus which you saw in your vision. Everyone in whom it is established or even who feels its influence will become a centre of the true consciousness and true action which will change life in the Asram.

14 February 1936

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Small movements of depression caused by unhappiness, dullness, etc. do not usually touch me. But there are also strong movements of depression and despair that come from vital dissatisfaction and revolt. When I get depressed, I would like it to be on account of these big movements, not petty ones such as dullness.

They can hardly be called big movements. The real distinction is that they are rajasic movements, not tamasic. 1 March 1936

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Movements of depression or despair that stem from vital dissatisfaction or revolt — are these not big movements?

They are not big — they are small movements of the vital ego — I mean the movements of vital dissatisfaction which cause people here to be depressed and revolt and despair. If the resultant depression or despair is strong, that simply means that the minds of the people here are seeing things out of all right measure and proportion, magnifying trifles into tremendous things, swelling

little hurts to vanity, petty pride, small ambition, *amour propre* etc. They make a tempest in a tea-cup, a tragedy out of a trifle. Because people are living here under the Mother's shelter and saved from the great sufferings and tragedies of human life, they must needs spin despairs and tragedies out of nothing. The vital wants to indulge its sorrow sense and shout and groan and weep and if it can't have a good or big reason for doing it, it will use a bad or small one.

1 March 1936

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When these things [*anger, depression, etc.*] come you should always try to get back at once to the position you have taken of leaving all to the Mother,— your own difficulties, but also the stumbles of others,— X's rages (he behaves with everybody like that), Y's moods and all.

It would not matter so much about occasional anger coming — these recurrences happen with everybody so long as the peace is not settled permanently in the consciousness. What matters is the suggestions that come, about death and going away and the rest of it. These you must throw away at once. They have no reason for existence when the inner working has begun and the Mother's Force is sure to carry you through. Remain firm within and recover your quietude.

6 July 1936

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I do not know why you suppose that the Mother was displeased with you for your letter. I think my answer was quite kind and without any touch of displeasure in it. I was silent about most of what you had written, because when there are letters of this kind I take it as an unburdening of the mind and always either remain silent in so far as it concerns others or else I say that we must rely on the growth of inner consciousness to get rid of the faults and deficiencies and mistakes of the sadhaks. Silence does not imply that these defects and mistakes do not exist. But all have defects in various forms and make mistakes and the best sadhaks are not exempt. The human way is to get angry and rebuke and condemn and, if the Mother does not do the same

or is not severe, to think she is unjust or partial or unseeing or wilfully blind to the defects of her favourites. But the Mother is not blind; she knows very well the nature of all the sadhaks, their faults as well as their merits; she knows too what human nature is and how these things come and that the human way of dealing with them is not the true way and changes nothing. It is why she has patience and love and charity for all, not for some alone, who are sincere in their work or their sadhana.

It is strange also that you should conclude that she puts no value on you. From the first the Mother has had a special kindness for you; she has appreciated and supported you so steadily that people have accused her of blind partiality towards you just as they accuse her with regard to X. When you were in trouble and difficulty with suggestions and revolts, she was love and patience itself and helped and supported you through all. Afterwards since your sadhana opened, we have been watching solicitously over it,—I have been spending time daily writing answers, giving you knowledge of what you should know, trying to lead you forward with love and care. Why should all this have been done, if we put no value on you?

You know these things but your physical mind has become too active and clouded your perception for a time. You must get back from it into your inner self.

30 August 1936

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I cannot keep quiet and clear due to the hurt feelings within me. I try to forget this thing by thinking of the Mother's goodness, but these feelings still come.

It is the usual thing — you allowed a desire to get hold of you and because it was crossed by X's action and the Mother didn't subscribe to it, you got upset first in the vital and then by reflex action in the body. All this questioning on the basis of an unsatisfied desire is out of place. You must get rid of this idea that you can turn a desire into a demand and then expect as a right its satisfaction and consider it a wrong done to you if it is not satisfied. That is precisely the kind of attitude of the vital which prevents the inner progress and drags back the consciousness

from the psychic to the lower vital level. Full trust with humility and devotion, that is the psychic poise and for nothing should it be lost. No satisfaction of vital desire can replace it.

6 January 1937

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X's letter is all right and I accept it as the apology I demanded from her. But things cannot be quite as before; she must make reparation for her fault not only in words but in her conduct; that must change and change altogether. That she can change it if she wishes to do so, was shown when she began taking my darshan and her behaviour for some weeks was quite satisfactory. Afterwards she called back into her the bad forces which I had thrown out of her and the recent outbreak was the result. That must not happen once more. It is not possible any more that the Mother should show the same indulgence and leniency under great provocation as she did before or that I should remain silent and let such things pass. Our attitude towards her and treatment of her must depend on her attitude towards the Mother and her behaviour.

In the recent outbreak she practically took the position that she refused to change anything wrong in her nature — rather she regarded what is bad and wrong in her as something noble, great and admirable. If that remains her position, she cannot expect that we should accept it, nor would there be any reason for my giving her darshan. People are here to change what is wrong in their nature so that they may do an effective sadhana. If they refuse to do that or even to try, they are not real sadhaks or disciples and can expect nothing from myself or from the Mother.

What was worse, she seemed prepared to be the instrument of an alien Force, acting against the Mother, claiming victories against her, trying to lower her in the eyes of the sadhaks, asserting itself and its ways, traducing the Asram and impairing the respect due to the Mother and spoiling my work as much as possible. It cannot really succeed in this, but it can give trouble, and I do not see why I should tolerate it. If she was not conscious

of what she was doing or the evil Force that used her, the sooner she becomes conscious the better.

Arrogance, violence and self-assertion have always been the bane of X's character. But in her relations with the Mother these things must go. She must learn not to force her will on the Mother but to accept the Mother's will in everything without opposition or murmur. That is the main point. If she does not take this resolve, she will always go on as she has done and relapse into revolts and that will bring no good to her. In short, however difficult it may be to her nature, she must learn self-surrender to the Divine. A "bhakti" which claims everything from the Divine and does not give itself is not real bhakti.

I point out some details —

There should be no more clamouring and shouting and violent insistence when something happens which she does not like. There should be no disrespect, aggressiveness or constant contradiction when she speaks to the Mother. If she has anything to represent she can do it quietly and without violence. And she must accept the Mother's decision in all matters.

She should respect the Mother's time and the heavy work she has to do. She has been allowed to see the Mother very often in the day but she must not abuse the privilege by wasting unnecessarily the Mother's time. There is a heavy strain on the Mother allowing her no time to rest and she must not increase the strain.

In her upstairs work she should try to be in harmony with others and not a cause of disturbance or inconvenience. She should not push herself everywhere and take up a position not authorised by the Mother. I am referring especially to her interference above the stairs when the Mother is giving pranam to the sadhaks. To intervene, speak to people and give them instructions is not in her province and only disturbs the Mother's work.

In her talk with sadhaks and visitors, she should refrain from gossip of a bad kind or drawing a black picture of the Asram which makes a bad impression on those who have joined recently and have had no personal experience of how things are, and on people from outside. There should be no attacks on the

Mother or accusations against her. All that is harmful to my work and I want it to change.

That is enough for the present; but it is a wholesale change in her attitude and conduct that I demand of her. If she is prepared to make a firm resolution to get rid of these habits and keeps the resolution, all will be well. If she is not prepared, then why is she here and what is the meaning of her professed bhakti for myself or for the Mother?

P. S. Explain all this carefully to X. It may be best to make a translation of this letter and give it to her to keep with her.

23 May 1944

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I feel very restless today. I want the Mother beside me at every moment; without her presence I cannot bear this body. What is the use if she is not in it? I wish to give up eating from today — I will eat again only when the Mother comes to me.

You cannot progress or reach the Mother if you indulge in such fancies as not eating. Obedience to the rules of life laid down by the Mother is the first necessity.

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To be turned to the Mother is all right and call to her — but more is needed; for that is only the first thing needed. There must also be a complete self-giving and surrender. For instance to follow your own fancies is not the right thing — e.g. this idea that to stop eating is the proper way to get rid of desires — it is absurd for one may fast and yet be full of desires. You know that the Mother and I disapprove of this kind of self-starvation and yet at the least excuse you bring it up and want to follow it. These and other insistences are your own fancies you must learn to give up. As for the desires, the proper way is to have a sincere aspiration and call on the Mother's force to work in you. When the Mother's light and force are working in you they will show you all that has to be changed in you and will change it provided you give your sincere and full consent.

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How can I live to make the Mother happy? Would living in sorrow and despair please her? I don't think she would like me to be dejected. May she throw these things out of me. I want to live happily beside her.

It is not at all the Mother's wish or will that you or anyone should remain in grief and despair; what she likes is that you should confide in her and be happy and cheerful.

That is what the Mother wants, that you should remain near her always in an inner gladness of heart and outer happiness of the life.

*

It is rather surprising that you should so entirely mistake the intention of my letter. I did not regard what you wrote as a complaint against X and there is nothing written from that point of view in my answer. You wrote that what had happened to X had entirely upset you, raised your doubts, been a constant source of harassment to your mind, that it was one of the chief sources of your difficulties and a contributing reason to your wish to go away. I gave what was the only true answer, that this was all wrong from the spiritual point of view — that you should not allow another's difficulties to add themselves to your own and upset you and drive you out of the straight spiritual path — and I gave the reason because each sadhak has his own way and his struggles and difficulties and they concern only himself and the Mother. That is a principle we have always insisted upon and we have written it to many. I do not see why my writing it to you should make you feel abhimana and turn away from the Mother.

If it is the family sense that is your chief stumbling block, all the more reason why you should push it resolutely away from you — not either cling to it or allow it to cling to you. When I said there was no reason for being troubled by X's difficulties, I meant no spiritual reason — vital emotional reasons, attachments have no value in the Yoga. Attachments may be difficult to get rid of, but it must be done; otherwise they will harass you and not allow you to progress.

If it had been possible Mother would have removed you

from the house. But all the same, physical distance, not being in the same place or the same house, is not sufficient to destroy an attachment. It is an inward tie and it is only inward means that can get rid of it. If you do not want the others in the house to make claims on you from the family point of view, it should not be impossible to make them understand it. It is what others in similar circumstances have done.

I wrote to you what I did in order to point out to you what attitude a sadhak must take in the difficulty about which you wrote to me. It does not mean that our help and support are not with you in your difficulties. Everybody's difficulties, yours quite as much as anyone else's, are the concern of the Mother and it is an error to suppose that she is unconcerned and indifferent about them. Her help is there for you and you must not turn away from her in misunderstanding and abhiman or reject it. If your struggle is hard for you, all the more reason why you should cling to our hands for help to get out of them and not for any reason let go.

The Mother's Attitude towards Quarrels between the Sadhaks

Whenever I do something wrong, such as my recent quarrel with X, I am met at Pranam with the same dry reaction from the Mother. Then later she says that there was no difference from her usual expression and attitude. How can it be so? Under these circumstances what clarity can come from the thinking mind or the psychic?

The psychic clarity would have told you that Mother was not likely to tell a lie and that if she says she did not tell you to go and that there was nothing in her mind except to give you help and strength since she saw you were disturbed, she must be telling you the truth and that it was your own observation or the inference you made from it that was mistaken — since the mind and the coloration given to things by the senses, are not infallible — especially when there is a disturbance in the vital. I do not know what you mean by Mother's reaction in the quarrel with

X since I can testify that when she heard of the affair (before you wrote anything at all about it) she blamed X and had no feeling at all of severity or displeasure against you.

7 May 1934

*

I must say what I have often written to people, that it is impossible for us to take sides in a clash between sadhaks or assume the role of judge and arbiter or of defender of one party against another. Formerly the Mother used to try to intervene or to reconcile, but we found that this only kept discord alive and fed the ego of the sadhaks. In most cases we pass over all quarrels and clashes in silence and almost all sadhaks have ceased to write about their conflicts because they get no answer. I have written to X once or twice, avoiding any discussion of the merits of a dispute, only to influence him to regard things from a general and impersonal standpoint so as to prepare him to give up that of the person and ego. I passed no personal opinion or judgment for or against this or that person. You must not expect me to take any other attitude. This is a place meant for Yoga and sadhana; personal relations of the vital kind with their attractions and repulsions, quarrels and explanations and reconciliations belong to the ordinary life and nature.

All these clashes which arise whenever you mix with X come from his weakness and yours. I have not imposed on you any rule of not meeting with him; but I have advised you not to give any field for the weakness which you yourself have admitted and which is evidently there in you. Both you and X are to me disciples and I have to deal with each in the way best for him or her. I have not pressed on your weaknesses and defects, I have given you time to find them out yourself and overcome them, for that is the best way. I have pointed out his to X when he was ready to recognise them. It is a pity that you should clash whenever you meet together a little, but you know yourself why it is so. So long as any vital weakness remains it cannot be otherwise. Certainly it cannot be remedied by "submitting to his demands and his ego".

16 November 1935

*

I am rather surprised at your description of the people who show contempt towards you. Leaving aside X who is not in question, there is nobody working with you who is far advanced in sadhana or is regarded by the Mother as more specially her own than are others. You are certainly as much her own as anybody else in the kitchen; she has always owned you as her child and little star and what can anybody be more than that? I see no reason therefore why you should care so much if anybody is not behaving well with you. I have told you already that people in the Asram—it is true even of those who have inner experiences and some opening—are not yet free in their outer selves from ego and wrong ideas and wrong movements. It is no use getting distressed or depressed by that. What you must do is to be turned only to the Mother and relying on her go forward quietly with your work and sadhana until the time when the sadhaks are sufficiently awakened and changed to feel the need of greater harmony and union with each other. Let only your spiritual change and progress matter for you and for that trust wholly in the Mother's force and her grace which is with you—do not let things or people disturb you,—for compared with the truth within and the journey to the full Light of the Mother's Consciousness these things have no importance.

6 December 1935

*

It is not possible for Mother to intervene personally in these matters. Formerly she used to try to intervene and arrange matters, but the only result was that she got reproaches and abuse from both sides and accusations of partiality and injustice and the quarrels increased tenfold. For a long time that has been given up. If we began again intervening in clashes between housemates or coworkers, all the time would have to be passed in that and the Asram would become a seething cauldron of feuds and collisions. These things can only disappear if the sadhaks become fully sadhaks in their consciousness and temperament, learn how to keep equality in all circumstances and consider each other. Only a long silent spiritual pressure can help towards that

— nothing else is of any use.

4 September 1937

*

You must remember what I wrote to you before that the Mother wants you to remain quiet and do your work as well as you can under the circumstances without allowing yourself to be upset by these things. Any improvement in the conditions of life or work in the Asram depends on each one trying to progress and open within to the true consciousness, growing spiritually within and not minding about the faults or conduct of others. No change can come by outer means; for this reason the Mother has long ceased to intervene outwardly in the clashes and disagreements between sadhaks. Let each progress inwardly and then only the outer difficulties will disappear or become negligible.

21 April 1938

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Each one has his own way of doing sadhana and his own approach to the Divine and need not trouble himself about how the others do it; their success or unsuccess, their difficulties, their delusions, their egoism and vanity are in her care; she has an infinite patience, but that does not mean that she approves of their defects or supports them in all they say or do. The Mother takes no sides in any quarrel or antagonism or dispute, but her silence does not mean that she approves what they may say or do when it is improper. The Asram or the spiritual life is not a stage in which some are to be prominent or take a leading part or a field of competition in which one has a claim or can rightly consider himself superior to others. These things are the inventions of the ordinary human attitude to the world and the tendency is to carry it over into the life of sadhana, but that is not the spiritual truth of things. The Mother tolerates all; she does not forbid any criticism of the sadhaks by each other nor does she give these criticisms any value. It is only when the sadhaks see the futility of all these things from the spiritual level that there can be any hope that they will cease.

In all these things there is nothing that ought to drive a man

from the spiritual life or make him go away from his Guru. It seems to me that it is only the Guru who can decide whether one is fit or not; to accept the adverse opinion of someone else on that point seems to me absurd and to act on it an offence against one's own soul; to judge oneself unfit and act on that is most perilous, for this judgment may be merely a fit of depression or a vital disturbance raising the self-depreciation of the tamasic ego. If I did not see that you could progress in the sadhana or had not seen any progress, I would not have persistently asked you to continue nor would I be now writing to you letter after letter (I write to no one else) to meet your difficulties.

The Mother and the Satisfaction of Desires

X said in class that one should not have a desire to possess anything, but if something comes one can accept it. For example, if somebody offers you a sweetmeat, you can eat it.

How can such a rule stand? Supposing someone comes and offers you meat or wine, can you accept it? Obviously not. A hundred other instances could be given where the rule would not stand. What the Mother gives or allows you, you can take.

My belief is that one should not accept anything except what the Mother gives or permits. When one is attacked by an impulse and sees it rise up, one should let it spread as far as it wants, and then tell the Mother to transmute it.

If you do that, the impulse may spread so far as to take hold of you and master you. If a wrong impulse comes, you must reject it as soon as you become aware of it. 24 March 1933

*

If our desires are to be rejected, why does Mother sometimes satisfy them?

It is you who have to get rid of them. If the Mother does not satisfy them and the sadhak keeps them, they will only get stronger

by suppression from outside. Each one has to deal with them from within.

4 September 1933

*

Sometimes things that I want come to me in a surprising way. But why don't I get what I want from the Mother? Someone told me that the universal Divine gives according to a universal law. But with the Mother, it is her Will which gives or refuses depending on what is good for us.

But what you want from the Mother does not come through a pull in the vital — it can come only by the faith and surrender — the psychic purifying the mind and the vital of all wrong desire.

July 1934

*

I sometimes have a desire to eat nice things, and now I feel this desire as I have never felt it before. What to do for it?

The only thing to do for it is to throw the desire away. It is absurd to allow small animal greeds like this to come up and obscure the whole consciousness. You have not come here to eat nice things and Mother is under no obligation to give them. In fact, if you have such desires as that, it is a very good reason for not giving them to you, as it would only feed the desire. Get rid of these movements once for all. Let the true consciousness grow and reject these things.

22 September 1934

The Mother and the Control of Sexual Desire

If a person is here from childhood, is it true that he has no sexual difficulties?

It is not automatically true — it is only possible — but on condition he gets fully into the influence of the Mother, is not too open to the atmosphere of other sadhaks who have it, does not get upset at the critical age and also does not upset himself by reading erotic literature etc. There is no one who has been able to do all that yet.

8 November 1933

*

After taking the position of witness, one feels strengthened to change it to that of governor in matters of sex.

That is good. The Mother is pressing for the sex trouble to go out of the sadhaks — as it is a great obstacle. So it must go.

29 October 1934

*

How does it matter if I do not have perfect Brahmacharya?

It matters a good deal to the Mother, even if it does not matter to you. It is part of what she asks from all so that her work may be done.

If I become wholly pure I might merge in the Mother, but then there would be no excitement left.

There would be many things left better than excitement.

It is for excitement then that you want to live, not for the Mother?

2 December 1936

*

I find that after several years the sex hunger has reawakened in me and clamours for satisfaction. What is the use of my undergoing a slow torture? As nothing else succeeds, I suggest the exhaustion of this complex which somehow has got formed.

The Mother has already told you the truth about this idea. The idea that by fully indulging the sex hunger it will be finished and disappear for ever is a deceptive pretence held out by the vital to the mind in order to get a sanction for its desire — it has no other *raison d'être* or truth or justification. If an occasional indulgence keeps the sex desire simmering, a full indulgence would only sink you in its mire. This hunger like other hungers does not cease by temporary satiation; it renews itself after a temporary abeyance and wants again indulgence. Neither sops nor gorgings are the right treatment for it. It can only go by a radical psychic rejection or a full spiritual opening with the

increasing descent of a consciousness that does not want it and has a truer Ananda.

23 April 1937

*

You say physical sex action must be avoided by all means.

Why so strict on it while tolerating vital-physical lapses?

Because the physical action breaks a law without which the Asram cannot stand and the work cannot be done. It is not a personal matter, but a blow aimed at the very soul of the Mother's work.

Outside sadhaks indulge and get a child, e.g. X and others. Mother disapproves and the man who does it has no longer the same grace as before, but he is not in the Asram and his lapse hurts only himself and his wife.

2 August 1937

Uneasiness in Mixing with Others

When I mix with X, I experience some uneasiness but I also get some pleasure. And when I mix with too many people, then also I feel some inner uneasiness. What should I do?

Observe carefully the people with whom you have an uneasy feeling and tell the Mother. The uneasiness and the pleasure can go together, because they are two different movements in different parts of you. Mother is not asking you for mental judgment about people, but simply with whom you *feel* this uneasiness.

29 November 1932

The Mother's Advice on Some Practical Matters

It is not without reason that the Mother gives directions such as that—about not going home after nine without a sadhak to accompany you. It is because there are many people of bad character who are about at that time, and if any women go about unprotected by men at that time, they are supposed to be women of bad character, so anything may happen. Even before nine, after nightfall it is much safer not to go about alone.

There would be less difficulties if the sadhaks learned to act according to the Mother's directions and not according to their own ideas or sense of convenience.

June 1933

*

Mother was giving you eight rupees, three rupees for pocket money and five rupees for any expenses you might have for the cooking or in connection with it or for washing, since you were not giving to the Dhobi. As you said you did not want pocket money, she suppressed the three rupees and gave you the Rs. 5 which was not pocket money, but standing allowance for other purposes. I do not see why this should upset you so much. If you did not understand or did not wish this distinction to be kept up, you could have told Mother so and sent back the five rupees or else asked her why she wanted you to have the Rs. 5 with you. These violent fits of despair or revolt because of trivial difficulties like this are not the right way of meeting them. Mother had not the slightest intention of hurting you or keeping you aloof from her. Why can you not have more confidence and credit her with a reasonable mind and kind intentions even if for the moment you fail to see her purpose in an action? This was a perfectly reasonable arrangement — if you did not want it, you had only to tell her so. Recover yourself and get back into the true attitude in which you can see things simply and naturally; do not allow yourself to be flung off the track by suggestions of the old kind. The only sure basis on which you can go is a quiet mind and confidence in yourself and the Mother.

1 October 1933

*

I am not doing any drawing or painting based on inspiration from Nature because I am not inclined to it nowadays. Instead I feel a movement in my inner being in which I aspire for the divine Truth to manifest through my art; when this movement is going on, I see hazy forms in a variety of colours coming down, but it is disturbed by some mental movement. I am waiting for the inspiration from within and not doing any work till then. Is it necessary for me to do some practice work to keep in touch with drawing?

Of course you can do one little study work every day.

Mother is constantly putting you in relation with a world of true harmony and it is that that you feel trying to come down — but you must keep your mind very quiet to receive it.

3 December 1933

*

I went to the market with X since he wanted to buy a wrist watch. He bought one on credit and promised to send the amount to me within four days, after reaching Madras. As he did not send the money, I borrowed the necessary amount from Y and paid the shop owner. I have sent a reminder to X but in future I shall not have such money transactions with him.

Yes. Mother not only disapproves of sadhaks running into debt, but she does not like either their being responsible for or having to pay for the debts of others.

6 January 1934

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Mother does not disapprove of your writing the book — what she does not like is your being so lost in it that you can do nothing else. You must be master of what you do and not possessed by it. She quite agrees to your finishing and offering the book on your birthday if that can be done. But you must not be carried away — you must keep your full contact with higher things.

3 May 1934

*

In asking for an easy chair I did not mean that I plan to do an easy chair sadhana. I asked because at present the pressures of sadhana are so strong and fiery that I am made to sit for hours continuously and my head becomes so heavy. Please tell me what to do.

What the Mother meant was that this meditating on an easy chair which is so common in the Asram is a new thing to her and she finds it a rather tamasic habit. There can be no objection to a long sitting or resting when you need it.

20 September 1934

*

Very often there is such a push of sadhana that I cannot lie down on my bed. Then I sit up for hours. Do you think it proper to give me an easy chair so that I can both respond to the push of sadhana and fulfil the need for rest?

Mother does not believe much in an easy chair sadhana.

In fact there is, I think, no easy chair. But all the same you can ask X. But he has some things that can be put on a bed so that you can sit there instead of lying. 1 October 1935

*

I wish to get rid of my continuous pain and sleeplessness. Are asanas likely to help me? A book I have speaks highly of the headstand, shirhasan, but I am afraid to do it due to weak eyes. What do you think?

Mother thinks that the shirhasan is not safe for your eyes. While some of these asanas are simple and safe, others are not so; they require a training of the body or practice under the eye of an expert. It might not be prudent for you to take them up in an amateur fashion. 5 June 1938

Imitation of “Great Sadhaks”

Observing X's recent conduct, I have lost half my respect for him. And when I observe other things done by him, it is all the more so. People will not follow a hard-working sadhak like Y or Z; they see what the well-known great sadhaks do. When they see X speaking to the C.I.D. man as if he were his oldest friend or keeping his own kitchen where he invites his relatives and friends; when they see A freely reading newspapers, going to hotels and talking to anybody, they naturally feel justified in following their example. And when, in spite of their conduct, these men get inwardly and outwardly much more than others, I do not think people can be blamed for doing as they do.

Who gets? How does A get more than others inwardly? X does not get more, he receives more—if others had an equal receptivity, they would get as much as he, and some do get plentifully.

Or again, if *B* or *C* prefer not to come to the Dining Room, why should others not follow their example? After all, the Gita's line does apply: *yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas tad tad evetaro janah*.¹ If the well-known great sadhaks go about loosely, the ordinary sadhaks have few good examples to go by.

The Mother has never set up *A*, *C* or *X* as great sadhaks and examples for others to follow — if people do it, it is their own error and their own responsibility. Even *B* cannot be imitated in everything though he is certainly a very good sadhak. But his not going outside the central compound has been sanctioned by the Mother from early times because it was his spiritual need. *X*'s one merit as a sadhak is that he is entirely passive to the Mother and receives without question all she gives him. As for his separate kitchen that is Mother's arrangement for him, not his own. The friends whom he receives there are people who have great devotion for the Mother or are seeking for light, the others do not come here though some still would. *D* always expresses adoration for the Mother and myself — she has always known us since the Mother first came to India. Even so this time also *X* refused to have her in his house, so she was put in *E*'s. It is not a bad progress for a man who has been here only a little over a year and had when he came a thousand ties with the world. It is also something that a man already marked out by some of the greatest English writers of the day as an equal of Keats and Shelley should renounce all publication and all fame and write only for myself and the Mother and the sadhaks. I know how impossible such a renunciation would be to most poets and writers and it seems to me it should be put to his credit as against any weaknesses he may still be unable to get over. For the matter of that who here has been able to become perfect in a year or two of sadhana? Not even the biggest saints or Yogis.

The whole idea of great sadhaks and imitation of them is in fact a mistake. Not to imitate others but to keep in mind the Mother's will and try to follow it is what is asked from the

¹ *Whatsoever the Best doeth, that the lower kind of man puts into practice.* Gita 3.21

sadhaks. Certainly if any sadhak had to be imitated in outward action, it would be Z and Y, not A or C!! But why do they want to imitate? Obedience to the Mother is the rule of the sadhana, not imitation of A or C. As for the line in the Gita, it is a statement of what happens in the world, not a rule for Yoga and the *śrestha* here is not the Yогин, but those who are socially first, eminent and leaders.

17 August 1934

Work for the Mother in the Ashram

All Ashram Work Is the Mother's Work

If anybody in the Asram tries to establish a supremacy or dominating influence over others, he is in the wrong. For it is bound to be a wrong vital influence and come in the way of the Mother's work. If you feel anything of the kind in anybody, you are quite right to resist it and throw off the influence; to accept it would be bad both for him and you.

But there should be no quarrel or ill-feeling or keeping up of resentment or anger; for that too is not good for either. . . .

You must remember that just as the Mother uses your capacities and gives them their field, she must be able to do the same with the capacities of others. If she gives charge of a department of work to one, that must not stand in the way of her consulting or using others. Thus X and Y are in charge of the building work, but the Mother consults Z too because of his scientific knowledge as an engineer and he has the right to make suggestions or criticisms or indicate any possible improvements, although he is not in charge. So too the Doctor is not in charge of the dispensary, but he is associated with the medical work and the Mother makes use of his expert knowledge and experience, whenever necessary, or puts in his hands the treatment of a case of illness. It must be the same between you and Z.

It will be best if you fix in your mind and keep to the true rules of the work; then you will have no difficulty or trouble.

All the work should be done under the Mother's sole authority. All must be arranged according to her free decision. She must be free to use the capacities of each separately or together according to what is best for the work and best for the worker.

None should regard or treat another member of the Asram as his subordinate. If he is in charge, he should regard the others as his associates and helpers in the work, and he should not

try to dominate or impose on them his own ideas and personal fancies, but only see to the execution of the will of the Mother. None should regard himself as a subordinate, even if he has to carry out instructions given through another or to execute under supervision the work he has to do.

All should try to work in harmony, thinking only of how best to make the work a success; personal feelings should not be allowed to interfere, for this is a most frequent cause of disturbance in the work, failure or disorder.

If you keep this truth of the work in mind and always abide by it, difficulties are likely to disappear; for others will be influenced by the rightness of your attitude and work smoothly with you. Or, if through any weakness or perversity in them, they create difficulties, the effects will fall back on them and you will feel no disturbance or trouble.

12 October 1929

*

Whose work is it if it is not the Mother's work? All that you do, you have to do as the Mother's work. All the work done in the Asram is the Mother's.

All those works, meditation, reading *Conversations*, studying English etc. are good. You can do any of them dedicating them to the Mother.

Meditation means opening yourself to the Mother, concentrating on aspiration and calling in her force to work and transform you.

18 September 1932

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All work in the Asram is the Mother's.

12 February 1933

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You can take as much rest as you need from the work. The pains are evidently of the nervous system and are probably due to some resistance or obscurity there to the working of the Forces.

What you write in the beginning of your letter seems to indicate an excessive attachment to a particular work, that of the D. R. [Dining Room]. All work is the Mother's and there should

be no attachment to this or that to which you are accustomed or to the things or circumstances or people related to it; for that would indicate a sense of possession or clinging in the vital. The vital should be perfectly free and ready to work or not to work, to remain in one field or to go to another, to do in one way or to do in another according to the will of the Mother.

I trust that you will indeed take the opportunity of this rest to make a definite turn in your sadhana. A complete surrender of the mind and the vital both in work and in sadhana is the turn that is needed. Not to be attached to one's ideas, feelings or formations, not to substitute them for those which the Divine Truth finds necessary for its workings, not to indulge one's sentiments, not to have personal preferences or, having them, to be ready to waive them at any moment and submit to the Mother's Will which embodies the Divine Force, not to follow one's own way but hers; this is the psychic submission that is most needed. So long as it is not there, a full opening of the sadhana on the vital and the physical plane is hardly possible. To carry on the sadhana in one's way and according to the counsels of the individual mind and emotional being carries you only a little distance — it does not bring to the goal. 15 September 1933

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I must remind you that all the work in the Asram is the Mother's work and no part of it is the personal property of any sadhak. The Mother can do with it whatever she thinks right. This is too easily forgotten by yourself and others. 7 March 1934

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My mind says that the whole world belongs to the Mother; all works belong to her and whatever is done with her sanction is done directly for her. But in practice there seems to be a great difference between work we all do for her and work done for her personally. When I work directly for the Mother and she says, "Go and bring this for me", my heart is filled with an immense joy. Yet I rarely find an opportunity to place myself at her direct service.

All the work here is for the Mother and there is no difference between her personal work and the rest of the work for the Asram and all can be done with an equal joy. It is the mind that makes the distinction. This does not mean that all work done in the world is the Mother's work — only that which is consciously done for her.

17 March 1936

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There is no reason for your seeing the Mother nor is this the time for it. Nor is there any room for discussion in this matter.

There are two things that must be clearly understood. The work here is the Mother's and she has the right to give her orders in whatever way she pleases and they must be obeyed. No one can be allowed to flout her orders, however conveyed, or insist on his own ideas, will or fancies. If you are prepared to respect and obey her orders without making conditions, you can be allowed to continue the work, otherwise you must discontinue.

Secondly, all violence must stop. If you want to remain in the Asram, this kind of conduct must cease.

18 July 1938

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You have promised that you would obey the orders of the Mother in the work. Mother has sent you herself the typed instructions for the work with her signature and statement that it was in accordance with her orders. You have returned them to X after cutting off the Mother's statement and signature with a note saying that you do not want this literature. This is a direct act of defiance and disobedience to the Mother. You have either to respect or obey the orders of the Mother or you cannot be allowed to continue the work.

18 July 1938

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(1) It is absurd to keep the certifying signature and reject with contumely the order it signs and certifies. You said you had never received detailed instructions and you said you would obey orders and instructions signed by the Mother. This one was drafted under her instructions and typed after careful examination by her and certified and signed by her. When drafted under her

directions and signed by her, the whole order is hers and must be so regarded and respected as well as obeyed. Even a proposal drawn up by someone else becomes her order as soon as it is accepted, approved and signed by her and must be so regarded. As a matter of fact even if not signed by her, departmental orders should be regarded as hers and obeyed, because they pass through her scrutiny and approval or are made under her general sanction.

(2) You have done good work which has been appreciated by the Mother, but that does not authorise you to claim an independent action in your work free from control. There is and must be a departmental control over all sections of the work and that control, through whomever exercised, is the Mother's. No one in immediate charge of a section of the work has the right to choose which order he shall or shall not obey, or to say that he will not obey orders at all unless they come direct from the Mother.

(3) All arrangements for the work made by the Mother must be accepted by the workers. The Mother has informed you that the arrangement for Golconde in Raymond's absence, agreed on between him and the Mother, is that X shall carry on control and supervision and direction of all the work for the Mother under her sanction or orders. Nobody has a right to question this arrangement or act so as to make its execution difficult or impossible.

As for the pressure you complain of, it is you yourself who have made it necessary by recent refusals to obey orders and the increasing violence of your reactions. The Mother has the responsibility and supreme and total control of all the work and she cannot allow it to be made impossible or ineffective on the plea that her orders are not hers because they are not given directly by her.

19 July 1938

*

What is good work and what is bad or less good work? All is the Mother's work and equal in the Mother's eyes.

Doing Work for the Mother

Is there any use in the Mother's spending money and taking trouble for useless undivine me? I am giving her trouble by my very existence and I am no good at all.

You have allowed yourself to accept the old wrong suggestions — for a mere trifle — and so got into the wrong condition once more. You were doing the work for the Mother I suppose, not for yourself — to satisfy her, not to satisfy yourself? Then if the Mother was satisfied, why should you be dissatisfied? You should also have understood by this time that the Mother's ideas of what is good or not, what will do or not do, are more correct than the ideas of your mind about it, — for your mind is always worrying and tormenting itself for nothing.

Drive all this away. You know by experience that it is a false road and leads to no progress but only to confusion and trouble. Open yourself again to the Force and Peace and Light — it is that alone that can make you understand and change you.

15 July 1933

*

I can only repeat what I have already written whenever these circumstances and feelings come to you. To leave your work is not a solution — it is through work that one can detect and progressively get rid of the feelings and movements that are contrary to the Yogic ideal, — those of the ego.

Work should be done for the Mother and not for oneself, — that is how one encourages the growth of the psychic being and overcomes the ego. The test is to do the work given by the Mother without abhiman or insistence on personal choice or prestige, — not getting hurt by anything that touches the pride, amour-propre or personal preference.

It is a high and great ideal that is put before the sadhak through work and it is not possible to realise it suddenly, but to grow steadily into it is possible, if one keeps the aim always before one — to be a selfless and perfectly tempered instrument for the work of the Divine Mother.

27 September 1935

*

It is very satisfying to have closed so well the work you undertook for the Mother, overcoming all difficulties and ending in such a satisfactory result. But your work for the Mother is always sure to be the same, thorough, conscientious and skilful and inspired by a firm faith and openness to her force; where these things are, success is always sure.

24 May 1937

*

If you leave it to the Mother entirely, then what the Mother would want you to do is to go on with the work as best you can without allowing yourself to be disturbed or troubled by these things which you enumerate in your letters, without insisting on your own ideas or vital feelings. That is indeed the rule that all ought to follow, to do their work here as the Mother's work, not their own; the worker must not insist on the work being done according to his own ideas; for that is to treat it as his own work not the Mother's. If there are inconveniences, troubles, things done not as he would like them to be, still he should go on doing his work as best he can under the circumstances. That is a rule of the sadhana, to remain unconcerned by outward circumstances and quietly do what one has to do, what one can do, leaving the rest to the Mother. It is not possible to have everything perfect at present, even supposing that what one thinks to be right is the best. There is much in the Asram and the work that is not as perfect as the Mother would like it to be, but she knows that the perfection she would like is not yet possible because of circumstances and the imperfection of her instruments; she arranges all for the best according to what is now possible. The worker should do his work in this spirit according to the Mother's arrangements and he should use his work as a means for growing spiritually in devotion, obedience, self-offering to the Mother, not insisting on himself, his ideas, his feelings and preferences. To be able to do that makes the consciousness ready for inner experience and progress in sadhana.

I have tried to explain what the Mother wants and why she wants it. She wants you to do her work quietly, taking all inconveniences, defects or difficulties quietly, and doing your

best; what X does or arranges should not disturb you—if he makes mistakes he is responsible for it to the Mother and it is for the Mother to see what is to be done. That is what she wants from you—if you can do it, then things will go more smoothly and she will be able more easily to lead things in the direction she wants. It is also, as I have tried to explain to you, the best thing for your own sadhana.

5 July 1937

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Is it beneath your dignity to do work for the sadhaks? It is an entirely egoistic attitude and improper for a sadhak. All the people in the D. R., in the Building Service, in the Stores, in the carpentry department, in the Atelier and Smithy, are all the time doing work for the sadhaks, the Mother herself is doing work for the sadhaks all day; in writing this answer I am spending my time doing work for a sadhak. Would you think it proper for the D. R. and Kitchen workers to say, "We are not going to cook for sadhaks or serve them; it is beneath our dignity. We will consent only to cook food for the Mother alone." Do you want me to stop writing answers to your letters on the ground that I am doing work for a sadhak and I will write only letters to the Mother and nobody else?

What was X doing in the kitchen so many years if not preparing the food of the sadhaks? And what was Y doing in the granary if not work for the sadhaks? All these ideas are perfectly idiotic. All work given by the Mother is work for the Mother.

November 1938

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If you say "I will not eat" or "I will eat only once until you do what I say," that is not *prārthanā* or *bhikṣā*, that is putting compulsion on the Mother to do what you want.

I do not know what you mean by giving you your service. If it is the old work, that is not possible any longer. Other work will have to be found. But you should remember that the true service and the true Yoga is to do what the Mother wants and not what you want. It is by making one's will one with hers and

submitted to hers that one can advance and feel unity with her and her constant presence.

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What you write is no doubt correct. There are very wrong ideas in the minds of the workers and not at all the right attitude. But we have not to do the work for the satisfaction of the sadhaks, but rather because it is the Mother's work, the divine work and it has to be done well and in the right way. If the workers or others are not satisfied, it has still to be done well and in the right way. When their nature changes and they see their mistake, then they will recognise the truth and change their attitude. Some have good will and have only to learn to see more clearly and get free from their mental misjudgments. Others are more obscure and egoistic and will take more time to get the right poise. Till that happens, we must go on with a quiet firmness and resolution and a great patience.

Work for the Mother and *Kartavyam Karma*

X asked me if for us in the Asram whatever is sanctioned by the Mother can be accepted unhesitatingly as our *kartavyam karma*. I replied, "Yes, if the sanction is asked for in the right spirit." He said, "What do we know of the right or wrong spirit? If the Mother's sanction is there, is it not enough?" I replied in the affirmative, but not with full conviction. Something was lurking in my mind suggesting that the Mother sometimes does sanction an act which may not be according to her will but for which a sadhak may have a strong desire.

If the sadhak has a strong insistence or a strong desire, the Mother may say "Yes" or "Do as you wish" or give her sanction to the thing requested or demanded. That does not make it a *kartavyam karma*, but simply a thing which the sadhak can do. Again if a thing is indifferent or unobjectionable and the Mother is asked by somebody if he can do it, that does not exalt it into a *kartavyam karma*.

31 July 1937

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So far I had the belief that all work sanctioned by the Mother was her work and work done for her is our *kartavyam karma*. Is this not so? If a person gives up all duties to his family, country and society and sincerely does work only for the Divine, as an offering to the Mother, is he not doing the Mother's work and is it not his *kartavyam karma*? Outside it may be difficult to decide this, but here, under the living Presence of the Mother, is this not an assured fact? If not, then what is really meant by *kartavyam karma*?

I was asked [*in the preceding letter*] whether everything done that had the Mother's permission was not a *kartavyam karma*. People ask for permission to a host of things dictated by various reasons — it does not follow that the Mother's permission to all these things are her dictates. What work is given by the Mother is her work — also whatever work is done with sincerity as an offering to the Mother is her work also — that goes without saying. But Karma covers all kinds of actions and not work only.

31 July 1937

Work, Sadhana and the Mother

You need not be so much concerned as to what others in the Asram may think about you or say to you. It is only what the Mother says to you or thinks about you that has any importance.

All you need to be concerned with is your own work and sadhana, whether you do it well and sincerely and with the right spirit. As to that the Mother alone can judge; you should not be troubled or moved by the praise or blame of others.

19 February 1931

*

I aspire to be divinised rapidly by the Mother so that she can take me up for her work. It seems to me it will be spiritual work, like she is doing.

How can you do like the Mother or do the work she alone can do? That is the ambition and vanity coming in.

5 November 1932

*

My condition today is that my inner eyes wish to turn towards the Mother and call her by closing my outer eyes. In fact, my eyes tend to close while doing any work. Is this all right?

If you are working you have to see your work, so it is no use closing the eyes; but one can always do the work in a concentration in which the inner being is turned towards the Mother while the outer does the Mother's work.

12 February 1933

*

The adverse forces have been active the last two days, but each time they came I sent them away. The report about X was false, but the information confused me and brought wrong suggestions of all kinds.

When things become confused outside, you must put on your mind at once the rule of not judging by appearances — refer all to the Mother's Light within with the confidence that all will be clear.

16 September 1933

*

In my ambition to serve the Mother, I asked for work, but now I find that I am losing the joy and cheerfulness I was enjoying before. If you think my withdrawal from the work will bring me relief, kindly grant it.

It is a pity if you have to give up the work as your work had been of great help and was very much appreciated, especially by X — but if it comes in the way of the joy and cheerfulness which is necessary for the smooth inner progress, Mother cannot ask you to continue. The necessity of the sadhana is the first thing to consider.

6 September 1934

*

The spirit and attitude you express in your letter are the right spirit and attitude, but you must keep to it always. Work done for the Mother without claim or desire alone has a spiritual value — you must not bring your ego into it.

If work is given that you think ought not to be given or have any other grievance, you have to say it or write to X and

ask him to remedy it or take the orders of the Mother. But to complain to others and create the idea that you are ill-used so that it spreads through the Ashram is to create disturbance and a current of forces against the Mother and her work which may have a serious consequence.

I do not wish to insist on this any more. Everybody makes mistakes and one has only to learn from them and avoid them in future. I am sure you will try to live up to the ideal you have expressed in your letter.

15 September 1934

*

Yes, that is the most important thing — to get over ego, anger, personal dislikes, self-regarding sensitiveness, etc. Work is not only for work's sake, but as a field of sadhana, for getting rid of the lower personality and its reactions and acquiring a full surrender to the Divine. As for the work itself, it must be done according to the organisation arranged or sanctioned by the Mother. You must always remember that it is her work and not personally yours.

23 March 1935

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You told me that if I get a miscellany of thoughts when I do not read during work, it is better to read, and since I have the Mother's "express permission" for it the idea of its being improper should not come in. But does her express permission prevent one from feeling uneasy? Suppose she gives someone a sanction to read novels and newspapers — does it mean that one will not feel a lowering of consciousness while reading them? One might just read and read and not attend to the work at hand.

The Mother's express sanction should remove any feeling of uneasiness due to the idea that it ought not to be done. As for lowering of consciousness, that is quite another thing — the sanction will not remove that. Also naturally one would have to read with one eye ready to be on the work at need, which might not be agreeable.

8 June 1935

*

I am glad of your resolution. The greater the difficulties that rise in the work the more one can profit by them in deepening the equality, if one takes it in the right spirit. You must also keep yourself open to receive the help towards that, for the help will always be coming from the Mother for the change of the nature.

29 September 1935

*

What you say is perfectly correct. There is a stupid spirit of competition and claim, as if by being here and working one were doing a favour to the Mother, as if her permission to be here were not a grace and her giving work also were not a grace. If the sadhaks could get rid of this wrong attitude, they would go much faster in their spiritual progress and the atmosphere of the Asram would be clearer and purer.

5 January 1936

Vital Energy and the Mother's Work

This [*renewal of energy for work*] is the thing that used to happen daily to the physical workers in the Asram. Working with immense energy and enthusiasm, with a passion for the work they might after a time feel tired — then they would call the Mother and a sense of rest came into them and with or after it a flood of energy so that twice the amount of work could be done without the least fatigue or reaction. In many there was a spontaneous call of the vital for the Force, so that they felt the flood of energy as soon as they began the work and it continued so long as the work had to be done.

26 March 1936

*

Don't be afraid of vital energy in work. Vital energy is an invaluable gift of God without which nothing can be done, — as the Mother has always insisted from the beginning; it is given that His work may be done.

I am very glad it has come back and cheerfulness and optimism with it. That is as it should be.

26 October 1936

The Mother and the Organisation of Work

There are certain things that X must fix in his mind and feel and act in their spirit, if he is to get rid of his depression and unrest and feel happy and at home. You will explain clearly to him what I write here.

(1) He is not here as Y's nephew, but as a child of the Mother.

(2) He is not here under the care, guardianship and control of Y, but under the Mother's control and care and he owes allegiance to her alone.

(3) The work given to him in the stores is the Mother's work and not Y's; he must do it with that idea, as the Mother's work, and no other.

(4) Y is at the head of the stores, garden, granary and receives his directions from the Mother or reports his arrangements to her for approval — just as Z in the B. D. [*Building Department*] or A in the Dining Room or B or C in their departments. Others in these departments are supposed to receive their directions from the head and act in accordance. But this is because it is necessary for the discipline and good order of the work; it does not mean that the work is Y's or the building work is Z's or the dining room work is A's — all is the Mother's work and must be done by each, by the head as by the others, for her. It would not be possible to get the work done if each and every worker insisted on being independent and directly responsible to her or on doing things in his own way; there is too much of this spirit and it is the cause of much confusion and disorder. The Mother cannot see to the whole work herself physically and give orders direct to each worker; therefore the arrangement made is indispensable. On the other hand, the head of a department is also supposed to act according to the Mother's directions — or in their spirit where he is left free — and not otherwise; if he does according to his mere fancy or obeys his own personal likes and dislikes or misuses his trust for his personal satisfaction or convenience, he is answerable for any failure in the work that may result or wrong spirit or clash or confusion or false atmosphere.

(5) Any work done personally for Y or another (not for the

Asram) is not part of the Mother's work and the Mother has nothing to do with that; if such work is asked, X may do it if he likes or not do it if he thinks it is improper.

(6) X has been given one work at least by the Mother direct — that is the cleaning of the kitchen vessels. Let him do it according to the Mother's directions and with scrupulousness and perfection; it will be an opportunity for him to show what he can do and the rest can be seen to hereafter.

(7) He is not bound to accept food from D and Y or presents etc.; if he does not like it, why does he receive these things? He is perfectly free to refuse. His staying here and everything else does not depend on Y, but on the Mother alone — so he has no reason to fear.

(8) Finally, he should clear his vital of restlessness and desires — for that in him as in everybody is the root cause of depression, and, if he were elsewhere and under other circumstances, the depression would still come because the root cause would still be there. Here if he turns entirely to the Mother, opens to her and works and lives turning towards her, he will get release and happiness and grow into light and peace and become in all his being a child of the Divine.

19 March 1932

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I saw X's notebook and found that there were big signatures of Mother. I thought: in what way is my work inferior to his so that Mother signs in my book with small signatures, as if she did not appreciate my work?

A small signature does not mean lack of interest — usually it means more concentration than a large one.

4 April 1933

*

I do not get copies of messages from the Mother. Would it be possible for her to arrange for copies to be sent to me regularly?

It is quite impossible for the Mother to see to every detail of the organisation of the Asram in person. Even as it is she has no

time free at all. It is understood that you can have the copies sent to you, but it is with those who have charge that you must insist on the execution of any arrangement. 20 July 1933

*

Yes, that is correct. Mother does not care for the food for itself; but she allows X to do it as an offering. So with the work — although the work has its own importance. Y and Z are not given physical or practical external work because their energy cannot run in that direction and they cannot do it — not because training in physical and practical work is not good for all. In ideal circumstances a many-sided activity of the being would be the best — but as yet it is not always practicable.

26 September 1933

*

X told me that Mother requires one person to do exactly as she wants him to, but it is difficult to find anyone. I do not see how the complete obedience of one person would be sufficient for your work or affect the general atmosphere. I can understand that if there were complete obedience and peace and light in many people, it would hasten the progress of the work. Perhaps even one person would be a good example for many to follow, but I wonder how many would do so. Anyway, there is some mystery in this “one man required”.

Such ideas are rather a mental way of emphasising the desirability of something — here, of such persons existing, or of such a consummation being reached even in one person — than true in the form in which it is put. What can be said as true behind the statement is that each person arriving to a certain perfection of the Yogic state becomes a force for the expansion of the same Yogic force, a *point d'appui* for it to work. How far that working through him can go depends on the person and on the receptivity of those with whom he comes into inner contact. Men like X, Y or Z for instance who have the push and communicating faculty do have an effect on others, even as it is, though it cannot be said that they have reached anything near perfect perfection in

obedience and peace and light, only an approach towards it. Naturally, the persons they affect are those who are capable of the contact.

22 June 1934

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It is impossible for the Mother to arrange the work according to personal considerations as then all work would become impossible.

25 July 1934

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X told me that the Mother disapproved of preparing a small platform near the window since it would look awkward. I conveyed the news to Y, but she took it much amiss. She thought that X must have told Mother that it was not possible.

I don't know why people always assume that it is X or someone else who has influenced Mother and otherwise she would concede everything they ask. Especially in an aesthetic consideration! On an engineering question, it might be different.

15 November 1934

*

X has written a very fine letter — it shows that he is very open to the Mother for he proposes at all points what she herself suggested to me today.

The Mother accepts X's willingness to remove his shoes if he has to go to the Dispensary, but there is this to consider. It is not only a clash between two sadhaks, but Y has throughout been seized, as he himself admits, by a Power or Impulse that puts false ideas into his head and impelled him to offer an obstinate resistance to the Mother's orders and to use every device — even the most childish and, to say the least, strange — to defeat her intentions. He does not reject or dismiss this action but justifies it and proposes to continue it unless the Mother yields to him altogether in this matter. The Power that got hold of him will consider itself as victorious and almost inevitably find other ideas or excuses to push him again to a similar action. Where that will lead, the example of the others has already shown

any number of times. If that happens, then the Mother will have to come back again to the steps she had contemplated and commenced this time. It is quite impossible that an important department of the Asram should remain in the hands of one who goes on making it a sacred duty to disobey in favour of his own ideas the clear orders of the Mother.

28 December 1934

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Is it the atmosphere of the Dispensary that raises these things? Your letter marks the beginning of the same attitude towards X as Y's was before it became acute, the idea that you alone are medically great and competent (which was his), a big "I" sprawling egoistically all over the pages, the sense of being in charge = a masterful possession of the Dispensary, the disposition to arrange and command everything imperiously and imperially in that kingdom. Please stop all that before it grows. The work is the Mother's and has to be carried out in harmony and the big "I" has to draw in its horns and become small, even if it cannot disappear altogether.

The Mother has given charge of the Dispensary not to you, but to you and X together (she does not want to renew a one man rule there, after what has happened). She accepted the arrangement suggested by both of you, because you were working in harmony and it seemed the one possible arrangement. She expects you to continue working in harmony — otherwise the running of the Dispensary will become impossible.

5 January 1935

*

The Mother has her own reasons for her decisions; she has to look at the work as a whole without regard to one department or branch alone and with a view to the necessities of the work and the management. Whatever work is done here, one has always to learn to subordinate or put aside one's own ideas and preferences about things concerning it and work for the best under the conditions and decisions laid down by her. This is one of the main difficulties throughout the Asram, as each

worker wants to do according to his own ideas, on his own lines according to what he thinks to be the right or convenient thing and expects that to be sanctioned. It is one of the principal reasons of difficulty, clash or disorder in the work, creating conflict between the workers themselves, conflict between the workers and the heads of departments, conflict between the idea of the sadhaks and the will of the Mother. Harmony can only exist if all accept the will of the Mother without grudge and personal reaction.

Independent work does not exist in the Asram. All is organised and interrelated, neither the heads of departments nor the workers are independent. To learn subordination and co-operation is necessary for all collective work; without it there will be chaos.

10 March 1936

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The Mother has taken away my small terrace work. She has not reconsidered my case and given me my work back. This disturbed me very much.

You are disturbed because of your vital ego. It is evident that your faith and attitude cannot be perfect, if because Mother makes other arrangements for her work, you at once regard her as unjust, false and tricky. Every sadhak ought to realise that the work given him is not his property—it is not his work but hers; she must be perfectly free to make an arrangement and to change it whenever she thinks right to do so. To challenge her action and demand an explanation from her or claim the work as personal property is an entirely mistaken and egoistic attitude.

15 June 1936

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What I meant in my letter was that the Mother does not usually think about these things herself, take the initiative and direct each one in each instance what they shall do or how, unless there is some special occasion for doing so. This she does not do, in fact, in any department of work. She keeps her eye generally on

the work, sanctions or corrects or refuses sanction, intervenes when she thinks necessary. It is only a few matters in which she takes the initiative, plans and designs, gives special and detailed orders. In the line of embroidery, X refers to her anything necessary or any of the workers undertakes something and informs the Mother that she would like to do something for her, handkerchief, apron, cover or sari. The Mother approves or disapproves what is suggested or suggests something herself or changes what is proposed. Work done in this way is as much work done according to the Mother's will as anything initiated, thought of and planned in whole and detail by her alone. I do not quite understand why you should consider that this way of work implies an absence of unity with the Mother's will or of surrender on your part. It is the offering within you that is important and brings in time the full completeness of surrender. 17 September 1936

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I do not quite understand on what you want the *anumati*. If it is about embroidery, I have said that to follow the existing arrangement, viz., when you have the will or the inspiration to do some work of embroidery, then to put it before the Mother and take her sanction or ask for her decision, is quite a right way to work according to the Mother's will; it is not at all inconsistent with surrender. But if you prefer to leave everything to the Mother and not suggest or propose anything yourself, you can do that.

Mother only asked me to write to you about the way things are usually done, because as she is not in the habit of thinking herself about these things, it is not as easy for her to remember and think out something as to decide upon suggestions put before her. 18 September 1936

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The Mother can give indications and open out possibilities [*about how to do the work*], but if the mind interferes and if they are not followed up, what can be done?

The Mother's Use of Department Heads

Now that the Granary has moved to a building which belongs to the Mother and has been repaired at much expense, it is necessary that there should be someone among its inmates charged with seeing to the place and to the proper order and maintenance of things there — a manager. The Mother wishes you to take up the charge of manager. You will see to the observance of the general rules that have to be followed if the house is to be maintained in good condition and also to all matters pertaining to the management. Whenever you are in doubt, you can refer or report to the Mother. I trust you will find that all the inmates when they know of the Mother's wishes will sincerely cooperate with you in seeing that all goes well and in an orderly way in the Ganapati House.

25 September 1933

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My complaint about X is his attitude towards the Dining Room workers — he is simply too harsh with most of them. With all his experience it should be possible for him to be a little more generous in speech and expression. Why should he make a wry face when someone asks for an extra piece of bread? It does not remove the person's greed; rather it gives rise to eating bazaar food. When Y breaks down weeping, could X not bend a little to indulge her? With a more pleasant mood and face, he could satisfy so many people and avoid the clashes which have been continuous under his regime.

I do not agree. It is impossible to maintain order if one is indulgent to everybody and strictness is indispensable. That is what Mother found when she was herself looking after the work; indulgence only brought absolute disorder, people became entirely selfish, undisciplined, taking every advantage they could. I do not see either how a system of indulgence to the moods of the women is likely to help their sadhana, — it is likely rather to nourish what is wayward and exacting in them. If they do not learn discipline and self-control, on what basis can they build their sadhana and character?

21 November 1934

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Why should the conditions of work be such that one is compelled to act and be guided by the will of X? It amounts to the surrender of one's intellect, energies and capacities to him instead of to the Mother. How does working under such a person help one's sadhana?

It is not physically possible for the Mother to give the work direct to each worker and exercise a direct control, so that physically as well as inwardly he may offer it to her. For every department there must be a head who consults her in all important matters and reports everything to her, but in minor matters he need not always come for a previous decision — that is not possible. X is there in the B. D. as the head because he is a qualified engineer. That is a necessity of outward organisation which is unavoidable here as elsewhere and has to be accepted if the work is to be done. But it does not mean that X or any other head is to be considered as a superior person or that one has to surrender to his ego. One has to get rid of his own ego as far as possible and regard the work done under whatever conditions as an offering to the Mother.

20 August 1936

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X is not wrong in giving importance to persons. It is quite true that the work would go on if the persons now in charge were not there and others were in their place, but in most cases it would go on badly or at least worse than now and there would be no certainty that those others would be adequate instruments of the Mother's will. For the work of the charge of departments for instance done by men like X, Y, Z, there is needed a combination of qualities, a special capacity, a personality and the power of control called organisation and above all fidelity and obedience to the Mother's will, the faith in her perceptions and the desire to carry them out. It is not many in the Ashram who have that combination. Before the Mother took up directly through X the work, now concentrated in Aroumé and the granaries, all was confusion, disorder, waste, self-indulgence, disregard of the Mother's will. Now though things are far from perfect, because the workers are not at all perfect, still all that is changed. In

that change your presence in the kitchen and A's in the granary has counted for much; without you there it would have been far more difficult to realise the organisation of things the Mother wanted and in these two parts of the work it might even have been impossible. The Divine Will is there but it works through persons and there is a great difference between one instrument and another — that is why the person can be of so much importance.

December 1936

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In fact, if X and a few others had not made themselves the instruments of the Mother and helped her to reorganise the whole material side of the Asram, the Asram would have collapsed long ago under the weight of a frightful mismanagement, waste, self-indulgence, disorder, chaotic self-will and disobedience. He and they faced unpopularity and hatred in order to help her to save it. It was the Mother who selected the heads for her purpose in order to organise the whole; all the lines of the work, all the details were arranged by her and the heads trained to observe her methods and it was only afterwards that she stepped back and let the whole thing go on on her lines but with a watchful eye always. The heads are carrying out her policy and instructions and report everything to her and she often modifies what they do when she thinks fit. Their action is not perfect, because they themselves are not yet perfect and they are also hampered by the ego of the workers and the sadhaks. But nothing can be perfect so long as the sadhaks and the workers do not come to the realisation that they are not here for their ego and self-indulgence of their vital and physical demands but for a high and exacting Yoga of which the first aim is the destruction of desire and the substitution for it of the Divine Truth and the Divine Will.

9 January 1937

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From the letters you write about X there can be only one conclusion that his behaviour is the cause of all the trouble, a constant cause of friction and disturbance. If that is so, the only way is to withdraw him from the kitchen so that there may be

peace and things may go on there more smoothly. If you are so upset by his conduct and ways of action and all he does is wrong and disturbing, so much so that Y also gets upset and you want to be relieved of the work or go home, there is no other course possible. We have no other reason for withdrawing him than this—for personally the Mother has had no reason to complain of his management of the work. But there must be some solution for this constant friction and trouble. If on the other hand the trouble lies in yourself, then it is that that must be put right and there is no use in these letters full of complaints against his behaviour; for then you should bear whatever trouble comes as quietly as possible and concentrate on receiving the Mother's force to cure you. It must be one course or the other. My proposal made by the Mother to X was that he should now withdraw from the work he is doing in the kitchen so as to diminish the causes of friction and even as head of the Aroum   interfere with your work as little as possible, leaving you to do things in your own way. If that is not done, something at least must be arrived at which would be a clear understanding and a practicable arrangement. It seems to me that as you have been doing the work so long, there ought not to be so many occasions for X telling you what to do. But I am writing to him telling him what you say about his telling you plainly what to do; he and you must talk it over and arrange it and X must let us know clearly what is proposed to be done.

3 June 1937

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X spoke to the Mother this evening about the proposal of more work in the kitchen for you. But before that we had received your letter and what you write makes it necessary to make certain things precise and clear.

I gather that what you want is to be independent in your work, taking from X what you need, and after a time improve the cooking according to your own ideas. But this is not the understanding with which you were given the work and it is not possible. The understanding is that you do the work with the materials given you and nothing more, as you are doing

now. Also you seem to say that you will find it difficult to work under the control of X and will resent it if in a clash with him Mother upholds him against you. In that case it is better not to go farther with the proposal of extending your work. For there has been too much clash and disharmony already in the D. R. and kitchen and the Mother wants no more, especially as a more harmonious working has been established after long difficulty.

The arrangements of the work are not X's but the Mother's. Several years ago she put him at the head of the food departments and organised them through him according to her own will not only in general but in detail. All changes since then have been made in the same way. He is there so that she may exercise through him her single control over all the work. It is the same system in all the departments and it cannot be changed. There has been much resistance owing to the wish of the workers to be independent, to impose each his own ideas and arrangements, and to resentment against the control of the head of the department. But all that could only lead to friction and clash of ideas and clash of egos and constant disturbance. The Mother has succeeded finally in getting rid of that and imposing some amount of harmony and discipline. It is not therefore a question of X's independent control but of the Mother's control of the work through the person chosen by her.

I may remind you of what I wrote about the spirit in which work should be done to be helpful for sadhana. It has to be done as an offering, without vital egoism or assertion of self-will, as the Mother's work and not one's own, to carry out her ideas and will and not one's own. It is work done in that spirit that opens the vital to her and allows her Force to work in the being and the nature.

10 June 1938

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We did not say that you must do *everything* X tells you; but if you work under anyone who is the head of the department (X or another), the work must be done according to his instructions, as he is responsible.

The work itself is the Mother's and it is the Mother who gives you the work.

The suggestion to go, like the desires which support it, come from adverse forces. If you take the right attitude of self-giving, all that will disappear.

The Mother and Clashes between Workers

You need not mind X's quick temper. Remind yourself always it is Mother's work you are doing and if you do it as well as you can, remembering her, the Mother's Grace will be with you. That is the right spirit for the worker, and if you do it in that spirit, a calm consecration will come.

1 March 1933

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You have written, "Harmony cannot be brought about by external organisation only . . . ; inner harmony there must be or else there will always be clash and disorder." What is that inner harmony?

Union in the Mother.

21 April 1933

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Everybody says his report or account is true and all the others are liars. Our experience is that each pulls his own way and arranges the facts in his own mind so as to be most convenient for his own case. But that is not the point. The point is that the rules laid down by the Mother must be kept in the spirit as well as the letter.

22 August 1933

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Do not allow yourself to be grieved or discouraged. Human beings have unfortunately the habit of being unkind to each other. But if you do your work in all sincerity, the Mother will be satisfied and all the rest will come afterwards.

15 October 1933

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It is quite impossible to take you away from the kitchen and leave the others to work in your place. Such a solution would be very bad for you, for it would mean your losing a work in which the Mother's force has been long with you and sitting in your room with your thoughts which will not be helpful or according to your active nature. It would be very bad too for the kitchen; your place cannot be filled by anyone else there, however well they may work in their own limits — none of them could be trusted with the responsibility the Mother has given to you.

The difficulties you have are the difficulties which are met in each department and office of the Asram. It is due to the imperfections of the sadhaks, to their vital nature. You are mistaken in thinking that it is due to your presence there and that if you withdrew all would go smoothly. The same state of things would go on among themselves, disagreements, quarrels, jealousies, hard words, harsh criticisms of each other. X's or any other's complaints against you are because you are firm and careful in your management; there are the same or similar complaints against Y and others who discharge their trust given to them by the Mother scrupulously and well. There are against them the same murmurs and jealousies as are directed against you in the kitchen because of their position and their exercise of it. It would be no solution for Y or others trusted by the Mother to withdraw and leave the place to those who would discharge the duty less scrupulously and less well. It is the same with you and the kitchen work; it is not the way out. The way out can only come by a change in the character of the sadhaks brought about by the process of the sadhana. Till then you should understand and be patient and not allow yourself to be disturbed by the wrong behaviour of the others, but remain quietly doing your best, anchoring yourself on the trust and support given you by Y and the Mother. It is the Mother's work and the Mother is there to support you in doing it; put your reliance on that and do not allow the rest to affect you.

14 July 1935

All that has happened between you and X, as described by you, are trifles and a little good sense and good will on both sides should be enough to deprive them of importance and to get over any slight disturbance they may create. Quarrels take place and endure because both sides think the other is in the wrong and has behaved ill; but neither side can be in the right in a vital quarrel. The very fact of quarrelling like that puts both in the wrong. Moreover, it is not right to be so sensitive about being dominated or controlled. In the work especially one must accept the control of anyone whom the Mother puts in charge, so far as the work goes. In other matters, one can keep one's due independence without breaking off relations or any kind of quarrel.

There would be no use in changing your work or your residence, even if it were possible under the circumstances. It is the inner attitude that has to be kept right, the will to harmony must be fully established. A change of work is not the remedy. The idea of a good atmosphere or bad atmosphere in the house is also a thing not to be indulged. One must create one's own atmosphere not penetrable by other influences and one can always do that by union and closeness to the Mother.

2 October 1935

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But why allow the behaviour of others to affect you so much? To go on with your work as if nothing had happened is all right and a progress in the right direction, but inwardly also nothing should be affected.

You must never think or imagine that the Mother is not looking towards you with love and blessing or that she can for a moment turn her face away from you. You are her child and her love is steadfast towards you.

23 January 1936

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I wrote that your letter showed an attack of the old consciousness because of its tone: "I will not bear these things—it is better for me to go away from here etc." These are the old suggestions, not the attitude of your inner being which was to

give yourself and leave all to the Mother. The attitude of your inner being must also extend to your attitude to these outer things — knowing that whatever imperfections there are have to be worked out from within by each one, just as your own imperfections have to be worked out from within yourself by the Mother's aid and working in you.

That is with regard to your former letter. As to the present — to say what you see is all right but there is also in what you write a judgment passed upon what you see. These judgments you have expressed in a statement of what you think to be X's wrong motives, actions and mistakes. You put these statements and judgments before the Mother — for what? That she may take some action? But for that she must form her own judgment, and this she cannot do without facts, precise facts — she cannot act on a general statement by anyone. It is only if the person whom X blindly trusts is named that she can judge whether X is making a mistake in trusting him. If he listens to certain people and not to others, she must know who these people are and what are the circumstances in which he does that; then only can she judge whether he is right or wrong in doing so. So with everything. Many general statements have been made against X by others, but whenever it has come to particulars in dispute, Mother has seen that it is only sometimes in details that she had to change what he decided, his general management was in accordance with what she had laid down for him as the lines to follow. Ways of speech, defects of character, errors of judgment in particulars, these are a different matter. Each one has them and, as I have often said, they must be changed from within; but I am speaking of outer things, particular actions, particular ways of doing things. There she must be told with precise facts what is complained of in his action.

If it is not a general complaint you make about the D.R. and Aroum  work but in regard to yourself and your work particularly, there too you must give the precise facts of what he has done or failed to do before Mother can judge or say or do anything. What is it that he has not reported to her or has stated wrongly to her about your work or you? What are the

conveniences that he has not conceded to you?

I write all that because you seem to expect Mother to do something. But she must know what it is, what it is based on and whether she can do it or not with benefit to the work. Quarrels and clashes of ego there have been plenty in the D. R. and Aroum , but that she cannot accept as a base of her action; she does not side with one or against another in these things. What is proper or necessary for the work is the thing she has to consider.

3 October 1936

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Your whole upset is founded on imaginations. X has not made any "lying" report to the Mother; the Mother did not show any displeasure to you for two days or any days. Your vital thought she must be like yourself and make a huge fuss about the perfectly insignificant trifle out of which you have made something gigantic, desperate and catastrophic. There was never any rule that Y's permission must be taken for anything to be done in the kitchen; it is X who is head of the kitchen and whose permission has to be taken.

All the rest is pure self-inflation of an imaginary trouble because you choose to think of the Mother as a capricious tyrant acting according to the ideas of false reports of her favourites, an idea which has no better foundation than the fact that she does not flatter or pamper your ego by agreeing with you and taking your side or giving value to your mental reasons, each one of course thinking that his own "reasons" are the only right way and to disagree with them is high treason against Truth and Justice.

What is amazing is that you should have got into such a state about anything so trivial as this boiling of milk and Z going to Y for an explanation. No man in his senses ought to quarrel over such matters or magnify into a stupendous tragedy. It shows that egoistic sensitiveness not only in your case but in that of many others in the Asram has reached enormous and fantastic proportions. It is time that the sadhaks of this Asram realised what they have come here for; — it is not to nourish the ego and

to insist on its being considered and fondled, but to abnegate the ego and seek only after the Divine. 10 November 1936

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It is very good that you have spoken and cleared up things. Certainly, it is quite true that the inner being should be turned to the Mother and her alone.

As for the work, the inner development, psychic and spiritual, is surely of the first importance and work merely as work is something quite minor. But work done as an offering to the Mother becomes itself a part of the sadhana and a means and part of the inner development. That you will see more as the psychic grows within you. Apart from that the work is important because necessary to the maintenance of the Asram, which is the frame of the Mother's action here. December 1936

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I do not know why there should be so much difficulty about the instructions; you have been doing this work for many years and must surely know the lines on which it has been conducted by X and what to do in most cases. In the others where there is no guide in past experience, you have to do your best and in case X's instructions are incomplete and you have to act on your own judgment, you can point it out to him if he finds fault with what is done.

For the rest your judgment about his method of work does not agree with the Mother's observation of him and his work. She has found him one of the ablest organisers in the Asram and one of the most energetic workers who did not spare himself until she compelled him to do so, one who understood and entered completely into her views and carried them out not only with great fidelity but with success and capacity. She has known more instances than one in which he has organised so completely and thoroughly that the labour has been reduced to a minimum and the efficiency raised to a maximum. I may say however that the saving of labour is not the main consideration in work; there are others equally important and more so. As for the principle

that everyone should be allowed to do according to his nature, that can apply only where people do independent work by themselves; where many have to work together, it cannot always be done — regularity and discipline are there the first rule.

I do not understand your remark about the Mother. The whole work of Aroum  , of the Granary, of the Building Department, etc. was arranged by the Mother not only in general plan and object but in detail. It was only after she had seen everything in working order that she drew back and allowed things to go on according to her plan, but still with an eye on the whole. It is therefore according to the Mother's arrangement that people here are working. When it was not so, when Mother allowed the sadhaks to do according to their own ideas or nature, indicating her will but not enforcing it in detail, the whole Asram was a scene of anarchy, confusion, waste, disorderly self-indulgence, clash and quarrel, self-will, disobedience, and if it had gone on, the Asram would have ceased to exist long ago. It was to prevent that that the Mother chose X and a few others on whom she could rely and reorganised all the departments, supervising every detail and asking the heads to enforce proper methods and discipline. Whatever remains still of the old defects is due to the indiscipline of many workers and their refusal to get rid of their old nature. Even now if the Mother withdrew her control, the whole thing would collapse.

You are mistaken in thinking that X conceals things from the Mother or does as he pleases without telling her. She knows all and is not in a state of ignorance. What you write in your second letter is nothing new to her. There were hundreds of protests and complaints against X (as against other heads of departments), against his methods, his detailed acts and arrangements, his rigid economy, his severe discipline and many things else. The Mother saw things and where there was justification for change, she has made it, but she has consistently supported X, because the things complained of, economy, discipline, refusal to bend to the claims and fancies and wishes of the sadhaks, were just what she had herself insisted on — without them he could not have done the work as she wanted it done. If he had been loose, indulgent,

not severe, he might have become popular, but he would not have been her instrument for the work. Whatever defects there might be in his nature, were the Mother's concern; if there was too much rigidity anywhere, it was for her to change it. But she refused to yield to complaints and clamour born of desire and ego; her yielding would only have brought the old state of things back and put an end to the Asram.

7 January 1937

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Certainly, I cannot say that the ideas you put forward in this letter are true. They are errors of the physical mind which seldom gets hold of the real truth of things. It is not a fact that the Mother got displeased and frowned on you every time you wrote about X. That is the kind of thing the sadhaks are always thinking and saying about the Mother, that she is frowning on them in displeasure for this reason or smiling on them for that, and the reasons they assign are those suggested by their own physical minds, but have nothing to do with anything in the consciousness of the Mother which is not in a constant bubbling of human pleasure and displeasure. I have tried to explain that to the sadhaks again and again but they prefer to believe that their own minds are infallible and that what I say is untrue. So I will only say that your idea is mistaken.

It is also not a fact that you cannot do sadhana, for you were doing it for a time and doing it very well. But your physical mind came across and took you outside and is trying to keep you outside instead of allowing you to go and remain within. That is why I have been trying to persuade you to go within and not live in these outside ideas and reactions of the physical being which prevent sadhana and only give trouble.

It is not a fact that the Mother wants you to be a puppet of X. Of the two questions that have arisen, in one, as to the vital relation which entered into your personal friendship with him, she has fully supported your view that this vital element must not be there and from what X has written I believe he is himself now convinced that he made a mistake and that it must stop. If he still has any desire for it, you need not in any way yield to

him, but on the contrary must be firm about it. But there is the work. As regards the work it is not at all clear that all you think is right and all X does is wrong. You speak of your personality and what you seem to say is that X is in the work trying to impose his personality and that you want to affirm yours against it and Mother ought to have supported you, but she does not regard your personality at all but insists on your subordinating it to X's. But the Mother does not at all look at it from that standpoint or regard anybody's personality. In her view people's personalities which means their ego ought to have no place in the work. It is not your work or X's work, but the Divine work, the Mother's work and it is not to be governed by your ideas or feelings or X's ideas or feelings or Y's or Z's or A's or anybody else's, but by the vision, perception and will of the Mother which does not express any human personality (if it did there would be no justification for the existence of this Asram), but proceeds from a deeper consciousness. It has been the great obstacle to the full success and harmony of the work that everybody almost has had this idea of his own personality, ideas, feelings etc. and more or less tried to insist on them — this has been the cause of most of the difficulties and of all the disharmony and quarrel. We want all this to stop; for when it stops altogether then there will be some possibility of the differences and turmoil ceasing and the work will better serve the purpose for which the Mother created it. That is why I have been trying to explain to you about the necessity of subordinating the personality and doing the work for the Divine, not insisting on one's own personality, ego, ideas, feelings as the important thing.

P. S. When I say that you are mistaken or do not agree with you, you seem to think my letters show displeasure and that my disagreeing with you means that I am vexed with you for writing your views; but that is not so. If I answer what you write, it must be to tell you what seems to myself and to the Mother the true way of seeing things and acting. That does not imply any displeasure.

4 July 1937

I do not think I said anywhere you had done anything contrary to X's instructions in your work. I was speaking of what you had written in criticism of his way of doing things, and especially I wanted to remove your idea that the necessity of acting under his instructions meant a disregard of your personality or a desire on Mother's part to make you a puppet of X. Where there is a big work with several people working together for a purpose which is common to all and not personal to any, it cannot be done unless there is a fixed arrangement involving subordination and discipline in each worker. That is so everywhere, not here alone. X has to act under the Mother, carry out her instructions, work according to the ideas she has given him. She has laid down the lines on which he must work, and whatever he does must be on those lines. He is not free to change them or do anything contrary to the ideas given him. Where he makes decisions in details of the work, they must be in consonance with these lines and ideas. He has to report to the Mother, to take her sanction and accept her decisions on all matters. If the Mother's decisions are contrary to his proposals or contradict his own ideas of what should be done, he has still to accept them and carry them out. The idea that the D. R. work is done according to his ideas and not the Mother's is an error. But all that is simply the necessity of the work, it is not a disregard of X's personality. In the same way you have to carry out X's instructions because he is charged by the Mother with the work and given authority by her. All the D. R. workers are in the same position and are supposed to carry out his instructions and keep him informed, because he is directly responsible to the Mother for everything and unless he has this authority he cannot carry out his responsibility. In the same way Y has been asked to carry out your instructions in the kitchen because you are at the head of the kitchen. All that is not a disregard of your personality or of Y's personality or an assertion of X's—it is the necessity of the work which cannot be smoothly done if there is not this arrangement. That is what I wanted you to understand so that you might see why the Mother wanted you to do like that, not for any other reason, but for the necessity of the work and so that it may be smoothly done.

On the other hand as you are at the head of the work and the practical working is in your hands, you have every right to put any difficulties before X and ask for a solution. He on his side will often need information from you and may need also to know what you think should be done. But if even after knowing, he thinks it right to follow his own idea of what should be done and not yours, you should not mind that. He has the responsibility and must act according to his lights subject to the sanction of the Mother. Your responsibility finishes when you have informed him and told him your idea. If his decision is wrong, it is for the Mother to change it.

I hope I have made the conditions clear. There is no necessity for you to agree with X's ideas nor outside the work are you under any obligation to do what he wants you to do. There you are quite free. It is only in the work that there is this necessity in action — for the sake of the work.

I have written so much because you wanted to know what the Mother expected you to do. It is not meant as a pressure upon you, but only to explain things and show you the way and the reason for which they have to be done.

5 July 1937

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It seems that there is friction between you and X. He says that you are keeping him at a distance from his work and asks to be given work elsewhere. The Mother does not approve of this and she wants all friction to be removed and work harmoniously done. Personal feelings ought not to be allowed to come into the work or disturb it in any way. It is you and X who know the Bakery work thoroughly and are the best workers; for some time you two carried it on between you. Mother has relied on this collaboration for the Bakery work to go on well. If personal misunderstandings are allowed to break up the collaboration, it will be bad for the Mother's work and also for the sadhana of both. If misunderstandings arise, they ought not to be cherished in silence on either side, but cleared up by a frank and friendly explanation. I am writing to X to the same effect. Mother expects you both to remove all misunderstanding between you and work

together in a friendly spirit.

30 June 1938

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The fact that people do work for the Mother does not mean that she must do all that they ask for with regard to that work and that if she does not do so it means lack of support or disapproval. That is the attitude of most workers in the Asram including X, that is an entirely mistaken attitude.

If sadhaks get upset when the Mother does not do what they ask from her or begin to get suggestions of this kind, that means that they are bringing their vital ego into the work,—they are thinking, "My work is not supported, the Mother is upholding someone else and not *me*" and other "I"s and "my"s of the same kind. It is only they who are feeling the work to be theirs, it is not the Mother who is so regarding it.

The Mother knows perfectly well X's character which is not alterable—it was for that very reason that she asked not only you but Y and everybody else in the Garden Department to avoid quarrelling with him even in case of extreme disagreement. Quarrels and clashes are a proof of absence of the Yogic poise and those who seriously wish to do yoga must learn to grow out of these things. It is easy enough not to clash when there is no cause for strife or dispute or quarrel; it is when there is cause and the other side is impossible and unreasonable that one gets the opportunity of rising above one's vital nature.

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You say that Mother showed her severity or displeasure towards you and she always does so when you write about X; but this is not a fact. It is your mind that creates the severity and displeasure out of its own feeling or imagination. At the time you came to the Mother I had not spoken a word to her about your letter and she did not even know that you had written about X. I wanted to read the letter over again and see that I understood everything in it before speaking to her (that was why I wrote it would take me a day or two) and I told her only in the evening after your letter of today reached me. As

a matter of fact the Mother's feeling to you was just the same as it is always — there was no severity or displeasure. This has happened before; it is not the first time. It ought to show you that the mind is not infallible and in following its observations and inferences it is quite possible to fall into entire error.

I do not think it is any use going into the detail of the things you write of — most of them are trifles which could easily be set right if there were not a settled misunderstanding between you and X which makes both nervous about everything the other does so that you magnify small things and give them an undue importance. It is the natural result of personal feelings getting into the work and there is no remedy except doing the work without personal feelings. I had hoped from what you said in your letter a few days ago that you had determined to get rid of it altogether on your side and do the work looking to the Mother alone and not mind what X did or did not do. If you could do that, Mother would have been better able to put a persistent pressure on him and make him gradually change and become less self-occupied, tactless and sensitive.

We shall have to consider the whole problem of the work and see on what new basis it can be put. Some temporary arrangement may be possible meanwhile, but not at the present moment. I hope till then you will try to carry on in spite of the friction with X. At the moment things are difficult for the Mother and you must give her some time to find out what is to be done and how to make it possible to do it.

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The remedy for these things is to think more and more of the Mother and less and less of the relations of others with yourself apart from the Mother. As X is trying, so you should try to meet others in the Mother, in your consciousness of unity with the Mother and not in a separate personal relation. Then these difficulties disappear and harmony can be established — for then it is not necessary to try and please others — but both or all meet in their love for the Mother and their work for her.

The Mother and Mistakes in Work

Mistakes come from people bringing their ego, their personal feelings (likes and dislikes), their sense of prestige or their convenience, pride, sense of possession, etc. into the work. The right way is to feel that the work is the Mother's—not only yours, but the work of others—and to carry it out in such a spirit that there shall be general harmony. Harmony cannot be brought about by external organisation only, though a more and more perfect external organisation is necessary; inner harmony there must be or else there will always be clash and disorder.

26 February 1932

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Do not allow yourself to be so much disturbed by so small a matter. It is not at all necessary to apologise to X. When one has a wrong movement, all one has to do is to recognise it and reject and be more careful to avoid it in the future. As you have told the Mother, let the thing disappear from your mind and recover your movement.

16 March 1932

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Something in my consciousness stops me before going the wrong way or doing a bad action, but sometimes it does not. I want there not to be a single wrong action which Mother does not like.

If you want strongly and if you always try to be careful, then that too will come.

8 February 1933

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Since the material world is only one of the several worlds, only a small portion of the total manifestation, should we not attach very little importance to material things, material work and its details? Also, from what Mother said yesterday it seems that one should attach little importance to errors in work—one should not mind them if others commit them, one should not care to correct them in others.

What Mother said was that she was perfectly aware of errors done in the work, but as she had to work out a certain Force in these things looking at them from an inner viewpoint, not with the external intellect, she found it often necessary to pass over imperfections and errors. This does not at all mean that the sadhak worker has not to care whether there are errors in his own work where he is responsible. If other sadhaks commit errors that is their responsibility, one can observe and avoid similar mistakes in oneself, but one sadhak cannot correct the errors of others unless that comes within his responsibility — each has to correct himself and his own defects and mistakes.

We are here in this material world and not in the others except by an inner connection. Also our life and action lie here, so it will not do to neglect the material world and things, though we should not be attached and bound to them by *āsakti* and desire. We have to acquire a knowledge of the nature and powers of other worlds (planes) so far as they are connected with this one and we can use them to help and uplift the action here. But still the field of action is here and not elsewhere. 21 August 1936

Relation between the Mother and Her Children

True Relation with the Mother

What is our true relation with the Mother — the relation of the Mother and her child?

The relation of the child to the Mother is that of an entire, sincere and simple trust, love and dependence.

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The relation of the disciple to the Guru in the Guruvada is supposed always to be that of worship, respect, complete happy confidence, unquestioning acceptance of the guidance. It is only in this Asram that another theory has sometimes been advanced and reached its height as a result of the *misapplication* or wrong extension of the relation with the human Mother (which in itself, rightly understood, was not to be discouraged as a phase) and also of certain other misunderstood notions — not only *abhimāna*, but egoistic unspiritual demand, hostile criticism, revolt, anger and other still more undesirable vital reactions (usually supposed to be foreign to the spiritual consciousness) have been put forward by some, admitted by many in practice, as a part of the Yoga! I do not see how such a method can lead to any good results in the spiritual life.

12 January 1932

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The connection between myself and the Mother is always there, but my vital is interfering, colouring it and making it impure.

Yes, the connection is always there, in the self and in the psychic; but if there are obstacles in the mind, vital and physical, then the connection cannot be manifest or, if it is at all manifest, it is

mixed with elements which make it imperfect and unstable. The true connection is the psychic and spiritual relation; the relation in the other parts must be built up on this psychic and spiritual connection and then it can be permanent.

24 April 1932

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One rule for you I can lay down, “Do not do, say or think anything which you would want to conceal from the Mother.” And that answers the objections that rose within you—from your vital, is it not?—against bringing “these petty things” to the Mother’s notice. Why should you think that the Mother would be bothered by these things or regard them as petty? If *all* the life is to be Yoga, what is there that can be called petty or of no importance? Even if the Mother does not answer, to have brought any matter of your action and self-development before her in the right spirit means to have put it under her protection, in the light of the Truth, under the rays of the Power that is working for the transformation—for immediately those rays begin to play and to act on the thing brought to her notice. Anything within that advises you not to do it when the spirit in you moves you to do it, may very well be a device of the vital to avoid the ray of the Light and the working of the Force. It may also be observed that if you open yourself to the Mother by putting the movements of any part of you under her observation, that of itself creates a relation, a personal closeness with her other than that which her general, silent or not directly invited action maintains with all the sadhaks.

All this, of course, if you feel ready for this openness, if the spirit moves you to lay what is in you bare before her. For it is then that it is fruitful—when it comes from within and is spontaneous and true.

18 May 1932

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It was certainly true that you saw the Mother and she was teaching secrets to your inner being—for your inner being is in close relation with her. It is only by your opening yourself that this inner being can come out and change the relations of

your external self with her, remove from it its sense of not being connected, its misunderstandings, wrong attitudes, confused movements. That is why I am always pressing on you to open and keep in touch with the Force — for it is your inner being that feels naturally in touch with it, — it is only the external and physical mind and vital that feel it is as if it were not real, not truly connected etc. etc. This you have experienced yourself more than once when the inner being came into the front.

3 November 1932

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It is perfectly true that in your inner being there is nothing that stands between you and nearness to the Mother; but in your outer there are many reactions that make it difficult — and the chief cause of these reactions is the readiness with which your outer mind listens to the suggestions and accepts the reasonings and obeys the movements of the obscure ignorant physical Nature. That is why I want you to get rid of this habit of the outer mind and to recognise that it is the inner being which is the real truth of yourself and not this outer consciousness with its confusions which is a present fact but not your true permanent being.

9 December 1932

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This morning I sent a letter to the Mother through X, but I have received no reply. Have I done something wrong? Waiting for a word from her I am suffering greatly.

The Mother replied to you through X that you could take the rest you wanted — at any rate she told him to tell you that; I hope he did so.

Feelings of this kind ought to be rejected always and there is nothing else to be done with them. The relation with the Divine, the relation with the Mother must be one of love, faith, trust, confidence, surrender — any other relation of the vital ordinary kind brings reactions contrary to the sadhana, — desire, egoistic *abhimāna*, demand, revolt and all the disturbance of ignorant

rajasic human nature from which it is the object of the sadhana to escape.

26 April 1933

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I am afraid you have allowed some old movement of the vital to come up and obstruct the work that was being done.

You know perfectly well that your inner being is near to the Mother, can feel her peace and force, can receive her thought, can respond and that that is the one thing that helps you. When you speak of the Mother seeming aloof to your senses, you are referring evidently to the physical nearness. You know very well what was the reason why it could not be for the time. But even there there was a great improvement recently and it was becoming possible and natural for you to approach the Mother physically without the old vital reactions, and the Mother was welcoming the change. This is not a time to allow the old reactions to come up and impede or throw back the progress made. Cast off this invasion, let your consciousness recover the quietness it was more and more gaining, let your soul go on growing as it was growing — throw out this reaction that impedes it. Let the Divine work in you and establish in time the true outward and inward relation which is the only one that can satisfy and endure.

7 September 1933

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Why do I get angry and make myself miserable when Mother proposes something I do not like, such as putting X with me in my house? If Mother herself wants it, why should I object and feel sorry about it?

It is desire and jealousy that are the cause of these movements. It prevents you from seeing that each is dealt with according to the needs and possibilities of his case. Your vital wishes on the contrary to impose a rule by which you shall get what the vital wants and if it does not, and if another gets it, you consider it a personal wrong and an injustice. So if something disagreeable to your vital, e.g. putting X, is suggested, you consider that because the Mother's proposal was disagreeable to you,

therefore it was wrong. The whole thing is that — that you are putting a personal standard — the standard of your desires and feelings — as the measure of truth and right. Most men do that — almost all practically; but to do Yoga you must free yourself from that altogether. You are concerned only with yourself and the Divine; in your relations with the Divine you are concerned not with the Divine's satisfaction of your personal desires, but with being pulled out of these things and raised to your highest spiritual possibilities, so that you may become united with the Mother within and as a result in the outer being also. That cannot be done by satisfying your vital desires — to do so would only increase them and give you into the hands of the ignorance and restless confusion of the ordinary Nature. It can be done only by your inner trust and surrender and by the pressure of the Mother's peace and Force working from within and changing your vital nature. It is when you forget this that you go wrong and suffer; when you remember it you progress and the difficulties become less and less insistent.

13 September 1933

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I have heard that the Mother gives flowers to those waiting for her on the stairs at noon. I feel I should try to be present there, to break my habit of shyness and to recognise her not only as the spiritual Mother but as the loving and compassionate human Mother as well.

The Mother is not giving every day, only from time to time. But why do you want to meet her as a "human" mother — if you can see the divine Mother in a human body, that should be enough and a more fruitful attitude. Those who approach her as a human Mother often get into trouble by their conception making all sorts of mistakes in their approach to her.

2 May 1934

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You are the Mother's child and the Mother's love to her children is without limit and she bears patiently with the defects of their nature. Try to be the true child of the Mother: it is there within

you, but your outward mind is occupied by little futile things and too often in a violent fuss over them. You must not only see the Mother in dream but learn to see and feel her with you and within you at all times. Then you would find it easier to control yourself and change,— for she being there would be able to do it for you.

30 May 1934

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The sadhak feels alone and suffers when he does not have the Mother's presence. Does the Mother likewise feel alone in the absence of her child? Is she more miserable than a human mother would be?

If that were the case the Mother would have to be in a profound state of million-fold misery all the time—for why should she be miserable only for the sadhak—why not for each soul that is wandering in the Ignorance? The child need not be miserable, but simply come back when the Mother calls.

24 September 1934

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If one looks into his own heart, he cannot fail to find the Mother's smile there. Why go out of one's heart, then, and seek for her smile outside? Why are so many here burdened with difficulties, falls, attacks, gloom and despair? Is it not because they seek the external part of the Mother, her physical nearness, touch, etc., instead of going inside?

Quite right. To live inside is the first principle of spiritual life and from inside to reshape the physical existence. But so many insist on remaining in the external and their relation with the Mother is governed by the ordinary reactions of the external unspiritualised nature.

21 April 1935

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You have written to some people about “an inner close relation” with the Mother. I want to know what is the truest and most real relation with her. Isn't the soul relation with her the only true one? What is the soul relation? How am I to recognise it?

An inner (soul) relation means that one feels the Mother's presence, is turned to her at all times, is aware of her force moving, guiding, helping, is full of love for her and always feels a great nearness whether one is physically near her or not — this relation takes up the mind, vital and inner physical till one feels one's mind close to the Mother's mind, one's vital in harmony with hers, one's very physical consciousness full of her. These are all the elements of the inner union, not only in the spirit and self but in the nature.

I do not recollect what I had written, but this is the inner close relation as opposed to an outer relation which consists only in how one meets her on the external physical plane. It is quite possible — and actual — to have this inner close relation even if physically one sees her only at pranam and meditation and once a year perhaps on the birthday. 29 June 1935

*

I don't feel any personal relation with the Mother. There lies the whole difficulty of the sadhana.

One has to become conscious by the awakening of the inner mind and vital — or best of all by the awakening of the psychic. It is quite possible for two persons to have a relation of which one is conscious and the other is not — his mental blindness or vital misunderstandings coming in the way. That is frequent even in ordinary life. Very often one becomes conscious of it only when he loses it (by the death of the other person or otherwise) and is then full of repinings for his blindness. 20 July 1935

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This thought of yours that Mother cares for all as her children and does not care for you is evidently a quite groundless idea and does not rest on any solid basis. She is as affectionate in her love and care for you and in her way towards you as to any others and more than to most. There is nothing solid or specific that we can see on which the idea can rest. Certainly, it corresponds to no reality in the Mother's feelings.

But I have noted that this kind of idea *always* comes up in the minds of sadhaks and sadhikas (especially the latter) when they become despondent or listen to the suggestions from outside them. Always they say the same thing as you, "You love and care for all; only for me you do not love and care. I am evidently unfit for the Yoga or you would not keep me far from you like that. I shall never arrive at anything. What is the use of my remaining here only to trouble you? What have I to live for?" But when the psychic being is well awake, then these thoughts, this despondency, these wrong notions are bound to go away. What you feel therefore is just this despondency and the wrong suggestions it brings; it does not correspond to any reality in the Mother's feelings or behaviour towards you. It will go with the rest as the inner being, the soul in you comes more and more forward — for the soul in you knows that it loves the Mother and the Mother loves you; it cannot be blinded by the suggestions that deceive the mind and the vital nature.

Do not therefore remain in these thoughts that have no foundation but are only a mood of despondency or a suggestion from outside. Let the psychic being in you grow and the Mother's force work. The relation of the child and the Mother is there in your soul; it will make itself felt in your mind and vital and physical consciousness till it becomes the foundation of the whole consciousness on which all the sadhana can be firm and secure.

26 July 1935

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The connection between you and the Mother is there and has always existed. Inside it is very evident and, when you are in the psychic condition, that which is inside begins to work. It is only the physical mind that suggests the idea to the contrary because outward circumstances are still inharmonious and unfavourable. Do not allow these suggestions to sway you. Seek the connection within you in your psychic being; then even through the outward circumstances it will shine out and change all into oneness.

5 June 1936

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My condition is changing so often; it is as if I were walking on hilly ground with plenty of ditches on the way. I am hardly out of one ditch and able to get a breath of fresh air than I find myself in another ditch. I often feel that I am hopelessly bad. I know that I would not feel this way if I knew myself to be the Mother's. I pray, make me feel that. Open my eyes to see, or rather give me the eyes to see, for I seem to have lost them.

You know now what this depression and the feelings that come with it are — they are the recurrences of the old unconsciousness attempting to prevent the rapid or full flowering of the inner consciousness which was growing in you. You should therefore not accept the suggestions of the depression or the idea of not being the Mother's. The eye within is growing — it is sure to be full and open after a time. It is why the old consciousness is trying hard to return and keep hold. You must get more and more to say no to its suggestions and efforts — so that the development may go more quickly.

July 1936

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If a man feels, "I am the happiest child of the Mother", is it due to ego-feeling?

It depends on the source of the feeling. If it is true happiness, then it is not ego. If it is due to a feeling of superiority, then it is ego.

Inner Contact with the Mother

Let the inner contact with the Mother increase — unless that is there, the outer contacts if too much multiplied easily degenerate into a routine.

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Today while going to the Mother, I felt concentrated in the mind, with a will to get contact with the Mother. Then I found that my mind was opening to the Light. I saw flashes of golden light two or three times. In the morning I remained peaceful and quiet and later I saw the Light many times.

It was the contact with the Mother that originally brought the opening to the Light, the descent of the golden light, the wideness and the knowledge. The two things naturally go together or follow one on the other; it is a mistake to think that there is any incompatibility or opposition between them.

11 September 1931

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On waking up this morning, I felt myself in contact with the Mother's consciousness; it gave me a good feeling and even Ananda. While meditating this morning, my mind opened up above and the contact deepened and I felt aspiration and peace. I have been able to progress and get experiences by keeping contact with the Mother's consciousness; but I have the idea that this contact is not enough to give me all the experiences I aspire for.

That is your mistake to think the contact is not enough. The contact with the Mother's consciousness will lead to *all* necessary realisations and the fulfilment of all true aspirations.

14 January 1932

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In my waking consciousness I feel that I flow always in the stream of sadhana, but in my sleep I am quite a different person. I want to be changed in my sleep also. During sleep I want to keep in constant contact with the Mother. Is there any process or should I simply call her help before I retire to bed?

Aspire and want it always — that is the first thing. As for methods, perhaps it is best not to go to sleep straight in the ordinary way, but to meditate and through meditation pass into sleep.

At least before going to bed have a meditation.

13 September 1932

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I was feeling very happy alone in my room, with an inner feeling of the Mother's consciousness. When I went to see X, I felt ill at ease and I lost the inner contact with the Mother. Mixing with people destroys the inner feeling, but I cannot

always remain secluded. What is the best thing to do?

You have to learn to live in yourself with the Mother, in contact with her consciousness, and meet others only with your exterior surface.

9 April 1933

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Today while engaged in work I felt a peaceful energy and something like ice touching my head. Then the knowledge came to me: "The Mother is always near us, though physically we do not see her, and she is removing all kinds of weakness with the touch of her affectionate hand. In every way she stands behind us secretly." This thing was like a feeling and a vision, almost like a realisation. Was it the psychic feeling of the Mother's presence in us?

It is a realisation attended with vision and feeling. It is the psychic and the mental together that produced it.

9 June 1933

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The one thing that is most needed for this sadhana is peace, calm, especially in the vital—a peace which depends not on circumstances or surroundings but on the inner relation with a higher consciousness which is the consciousness of the Divine, of the Mother. Those who have not that or do not aspire to get it can come here and live in the Asram for ten or twenty years and yet be as restless and full of struggle as ever,—those who open their mind and vital to the Mother's strength and peace can get it even in the hardest and most unpleasant work and the worst circumstances.

October 1933

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I would like the Mother to fix my timings as to what should be done at what time for the whole day. I will abide by whatever she determines for my progress.

To fix times is not possible or desirable—you must yourself organise your day in such a manner as to make the best use of it and let the Mother know how you do it.

I am ready to give up all my relations with everyone and be merged in the Mother alone. Please tell me what rules I should follow to overcome all obstacles. May Mother help me both inwardly and outwardly.

The most important thing is to be turned inwardly towards the Mother and to her alone. To avoid too many outward contacts is necessary only in order to help in this — but it is not necessary nor desirable to avoid all contacts with people. What is necessary is to meet these contacts with the right inner consciousness, not throwing yourself out — treating them as things of the surface — not getting attached to them or absorbed by them in any way.

28 October 1933

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I wanted to ask you whether what I have said about my inner contact with the Mother is true or not. It may be that my vital mind is deluding me about this.

At any rate if you want the Mother's contact always, you must get rid of depression and the mental imaginations that bring it. Nothing comes more in the way than that. 3 January 1934

3 January 1934

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No one need be jealous of anything or anybody, since each has his own point of contact which nobody else has — apart from what all have. 4 January 1934

4 January 1934

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You wrote to me that making Pranam to the Mother would bear fruit “if one keeps the right contact with her inwardly all day”.¹ What exactly did you mean?

I meant the inner contact in which one either feels one with her or in contact with her or aware of her presence or, at the very least, turned towards her always. 18 March 1934

18 March 1934

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¹ See letter of 16 March 1935 on page 532-33.—Ed.

For a long time I was thinking of meeting the Mother but was hesitating to ask for an interview. Last night in dream I met her and had a talk with her. Was it the real Mother I met or some constructed figure of my dream-mind?

Of course, it was the Mother you met and the meeting must have been due to your thought about meeting her. 9 June 1935

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If it is like that, it is probably because you are living outside, allowing yourself to be disturbed by outward contacts. One cannot find happiness of a lasting character unless one lives within. Work, action must be offered to the Mother, done for her sake only, without any thought for yourself, your own ideas, preferences, feelings, likes and dislikes. If one's eyes are fixed on these latter things, then at every step one gets some friction either in the mind or vital or, if these are comparatively quiet, in the body and nerves. Peace and joy can only become stable if one lives within with the Mother.

2 January 1937

The Right Way of Loving the Mother

The contact between mother and child means not only that the mother should love the child but that the child should love the mother and obey her. You want to be the true child of the Mother, but the first thing for that is to put yourself into her hands and let her guide you and to follow her will—and not disregard it or revolt against her. You know all this perfectly well—why do you ignore it?

It is part of the true Mother's love not to do whatever the vital of the child demands, for she knows that it would be extremely bad for him. Do not obey the impulse of the vital, but follow rather your true perception and make yourself a channel for the will of the Mother—because her will is always that you should grow into your true being.

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The love which is turned towards the Divine ought not to be the usual vital feeling which men call by that name; for that is not love, but only a vital desire, an instinct of appropriation, the impulse to possess and monopolise. Not only is this not the divine Love, but it ought not to be allowed to mix in the least degree in the Yoga. The true love for the Divine is a self-giving, free of demand, full of submission and surrender; it makes no claim, imposes no condition, strikes no bargain, indulges in no violences of jealousy or pride or anger — for these things are not in its composition. In return the Divine Mother also gives herself, but freely — and this represents itself in an inner giving — her presence in your mind, your vital, your physical consciousness, her power re-creating you in the divine nature, taking up all the movements of your being and directing them towards perfection and fulfilment, her love enveloping you and carrying you in its arms Godwards. It is this that you must aspire to feel and possess in all your parts down to the very material, and here there is no limitation either of time or of completeness. If one truly aspires and gets it, there ought to be no room for any other claim or for any disappointed desire. And if one truly aspires, one does unfailingly get it, more and more as the purification proceeds and the nature undergoes its needed change.

Keep your love pure of all selfish claim and desire; you will find that you are getting all the love that you can bear and absorb in answer.

Realise also that the Realisation must come first, the work to be done, not the satisfaction of claim and desire. It is only when the Divine Consciousness in its supramental Light and Power has descended and transformed the physical that other things can be given a prominent place — and then too it will not be the satisfaction of desire, but the fulfilment of the Divine Truth in each and all and in the new life that is to express it. In the divine life all is for the sake of the Divine and not for the sake of the ego.

I should perhaps add one or two things to avoid misapprehensions. First, the love for the Divine of which I speak is not a psychic love only; it is the love of all the being, the vital and vital-physical included, — all are capable of the same

self-giving. It is a mistake to believe that if the vital loves, it must be a love that demands and imposes the satisfaction of its desire; it is a mistake to think that it must be either that or else the vital, in order to escape from its "attachment", must draw away altogether from the object of its love. The vital can be as absolute in its unquestioning self-giving as any other part of the nature; nothing can be more generous than its movement when it forgets self for the Beloved. The vital and physical should both give themselves in the true way — the way of true love, not of ego desire.

1 August 1931

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What I want of you is not to love the Mother from a distance, but to become accustomed to feel her presence, her help, the working of her forces even when she is not physically present and this not only in your sleep or inward-drawn condition (which seems to be sufficiently easy for you) but in your waking consciousness whether in meditation or in ordinary hours. And this I want because it would give a great push to your Yoga. It would besides give a deeper meaning and power to your physical contact with her. I am sure that all this will come fully in time.

22 November 1931

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I have been here for one and a half years but I know nothing of the sadhana. I meditate, but nothing happens in the meditation. I feel there is no love in me towards the Mother. What shall I do to feel this love?

Become truthful, pure, sincere, straightforward.

1 July 1935

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Parts of my being are insisting on a physical expression of the Mother's love. Although at present there is no attack or depression, there is only dryness and dullness. Even if the sadhana returns and I get very high or deep experiences, they will be worth little so long as my love for the Mother does not return.

It is a mistake to think like that. The experiences prepare the different parts of the being for loving in the right way, so that it is not the soul alone that loves. So long as they are open to ignorance and ego they cannot receive and hold the love rightly.

23 October 1935

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Both the love for the Mother which you feel so strongly and the other tendency of harmony and affection with those with whom you live or work come from the psychic being. When the psychic intensifies its influence, this love for the Mother becomes strong and is the main mover of the nature. But there is also a feeling of good will, harmony, kindness or affection towards others which also comes up and is not so much personal as the result of the soul's inmost relation to all souls who are children of the Mother. There is no harm in this psychic feeling, on the contrary it creates happiness and harmony—it is only the vital love between persons that has to be rejected because it draws away from full consecration to the Divine. But this helps the growth of the soul into the Mother's consciousness and helps the work and helps also the inner life to grow.

10 February 1936

Receiving What the Mother Gives

The Mother gives whatever is necessary for each one; she does not withhold what one requires and is capable of receiving. It is we who are not ready to receive what she gives.

Yes, Mother is always willing to give and nothing pleases her better than to see her children receiving what she has to give.

Telling the Whole Truth

The unwillingness to tell the whole truth, the wish to conceal or justify things is another general trait of human nature which is common in the Asram. It is perfectly true that to do that is to stand in the way of one's own progress, but the lower nature is

strong and overcomes the *buddhi*. People also think that Mother will not know if they do not tell or at least she won't know the physical facts even if she can read the inner movements and they prefer to conceal or else to write in such a way that they may stand well in her eyes. This weakness like others can only go by the growth of the psychic and its taking hold of the mind and vital so that they will not be able to hide from themselves their own wrong movements or try to hide them from the Mother.

30 January 1936

Psychic Relation with the Mother

Your dream was certainly not a mere dream or an imagination, but a true experience. It expressed the relation between your psychic being and the Mother.

That relation is always there; it is prevented from filling up the whole vital and physical consciousness by the old habitual movements that return upon the lower vital and physical and by the assent some part of the mind, when it is obscured, gives to these movements. Do not allow your mind to give this assent, and do not allow any demand to rise in your vital, for it is usually some vital demand or disappointment of demand that is the occasion for these returns.

The whole mental, vital and physical consciousness will then begin to be filled with the permanent relation which is natural to the psychic part of you. There would then be no serious difficulty or disturbing struggle.

26 April 1932

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Throughout the day my vital has wept. It feels that the Mother is unsympathetic to it and laments that it is deprived of her affection. It stumbles at her silence; it shrinks at her neglect.

All that is simply the unregenerated vital which is full of ego and desire and demand and therefore of dissatisfaction, complaint, false ideas and self-made sorrow.

But there is another movement in me which wants to avoid all

such sorrows and joys and just depend on the Mother. It does not want anything from her, but wants to give itself to her, and prays to her to come down and uplift it. This movement is in the heart. Its principal feature is surrender.

What you write here is an exact description of the psychic being and its relation to the Mother. That is the true relation. If you want to succeed in this Yoga, you must take your stand on the psychic relation and reject the egoistic vital movement. The psychic being coming to the front and staying there is the decisive movement in the Yoga. It is that which happened when you saw the Mother last — the psychic being came in front. But you must keep it in front. You will not be able to do that if you listen to the vital ego and its outcries. It is by faith and surrender and the joy of pure self-giving — the psychic attitude — that one grows into the Truth and becomes united with the Divine.

26 February 1933

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You wrote that when I saw Mother last time my psychic being was in the front.

No. I said it came out as the result of your last coming to Mother — I meant by that what Mother put there. It was evident to me afterwards by your condition.

Now I remember my inner state at the time, but I do not recall anything special in it. When I met Mother I was simply quiet and a little dependent on her.

That was enough to allow Mother to work. It is when the vital demands, complains, becomes sorrowful and tragic that difficulty is created.

27 February 1933

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How can I know the Mother's will? If I feel that it is inconvenient to do something, does it mean that it is against her will?

How can your convenience or inconvenience be the indication of the Mother's will? You have to develop the psychic feeling which distinguishes the truth from the falsehood, the divine from the undivine.

11 April 1933

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Do love and faith have the same meaning? I feel that where there is faith in the Mother, love is also there. Without the faith, there is no love; without the love, there is no faith. Am I right?

Not always. There are plenty of people who have some faith without love, though they may have a certain kind of mental bhakti, and plenty who have some love but no faith. But if it is the true psychic love, then faith goes with it, and if there is the entire faith, then the psychic love becomes soon awake.

Speaking with X, I said: "Where there is faith in the Mother, there is love as well."

You are right—if it is the soul's faith, the soul's love—but in some there is only a vital feeling and that brings, when it is disappointed, revolt and anger and they go away. 8 May 1933

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What kind of feeling is it that gets satisfaction and Ananda only in seeing the Mother?

It is psychic.

What kind of feeling is it that gets satisfaction and Ananda only in remembering the Mother?

Psychic.

What kind of feeling is it that gives a wound in the heart on hearing anything against the Mother?

Psychic.

What kind of feeling is it that makes one feel the Mother's presence in the heart, even though one is physically far from her?

Psychic.

How shall I be able to judge that I am in the full state of psychic love?

By the absence of ego, by pure devotion, by submission and surrender to the Divine.

9 May 1933

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When all is calm and quiet I feel a depth in my heart; a sweet feeling wells out constantly, equally for all. It goes up to the Mother continuously. There is a sense of sweet relation with the Divine. It softens all the being—it is calm, quiet, full of sweet peace and satisfaction.

That is the psychic love.

26 October 1933

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From the morning there has been a feeling of nearness to the Mother, almost as if there were no difference between us. But how can that be possible, as there is such a great gulf between her and me? I am on the mental plane and she is on the highest Supramental.

But the Mother is there not only on the Supramental but on all the planes. And especially she is close to everyone in the psychic part (the inner heart), so when that opens, the feeling of nearness naturally comes.

11 December 1933

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Why do I not feel love and Ananda every time I see the Mother?

As for the love and Ananda, it depends on the psychic coming up.

29 July 1934

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For two days there was an intense love for the Mother and for you; the whole being was possessed with this love. Then there was only a partial effect of it — a high and deep reverence for the Master and the Mother and a happiness that no worldly pleasure can give.

That was obviously psychic.

I often mark that when an inner love springs out for the divinity, tears follow.

These are psychic tears of devotion etc.

25 August 1934

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A visitor was leaving the Asram today. When the Mother finished the Pranam ceremony and began to go up the stairs, this lady began to weep. Was it due to her psychic coming in front for a while?

It is not a question of the psychic coming in front. She has a psychic being which is awake and has long been in connection with the Mother on the inner plane.

28 August 1934

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During my turn at darshan, the consciousness was simply held in a spell and thrilled. It was quite wonderful and brought my psychic in front. What is this thrill that passes through my whole body and makes the adhar still for a time?

Of course it is the thrill of the Mother's touch coming from above and felt by the psychic and vital together.

28 August 1934

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Can there be a conscious contact with the Mother through the psychic being in the heart before the psychic comes forward fully?

Yes. The psychic is always there.

21 September 1934

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That which calls is your own psychic being whose place is deep inside behind the heart-centre. Many people feel at times the call for the Mother going on from there. It comes more easily in sleep or in a half-waking condition because then the surface mind is not active so that what is going on within in the inner being can manifest itself.

29 October 1934

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When I spoke of “loneliness”, I meant that some part of the being feels that although the Mother loves me very much, I am unable to love her—as if there were no element of love in my nature.

It can't be the psychic in that case. The psychic never feels that it cannot love the Divine.

4 December 1934

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If the present intensity prolongs itself, I hope that within a few days you will see my whole nature engrossed only in feeling, thinking, acting round the word “Mother”.

That would of itself be the psychic state.

5 December 1934

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I pray: “Dear Mother, either give me psychic love or give me death. Let no third thing come to me. This is my final resolution.”

This is altogether the wrong attitude. It is once more the vital coming in—it is not a psychic attitude. If in asking for the psychic love, you take an attitude that is vital not psychic, how do you expect the psychic to come?

2 March 1935

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My consciousness is concentrated only on the Mother's heart, as if it were there in her and one with her. It thinks only of oneness with her; it says, “I am there in her and I must be there. I need nothing else—that is enough.” It does not allow any other thought, not even higher or spiritual thoughts. How do you look upon this attitude?

The attitude is good for the awakening of the psychic and the inner being generally. But if higher experience comes, it should not be stopped.

12 March 1935

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Am I right that for the last four years my psychic is always active and in front? Can the Mother now deal with me without any consideration of upsetting my nature parts?

If your psychic is in front and active, i.e. busy changing and controlling the mind, vital and physical, how is it that there is an upsetting of your nature by the Mother's dealings with you? If the psychic is in front and active, it would immediately tell any part of the nature that wanted to get upset, "Whatever the Mother does or decides must be accepted with surrender and gladness. The mind must not believe that it knows better than the Mother what ought to be done, the vital must not want the Mother to act according to its wants and preferences. For such ideas and desires belong to the old nature and have no place in the psychic and spiritual. They are the errors of the ego." And if it had the control of the nature, the upsetting would at once cease or fade away. Indeed if it had full control, such upsettings would be impossible. It must be assumed therefore that the psychic may have been exerting some influence on the being, but that its control is far from complete or that the vital has risen up and covered the psychic and suspended its influence. But if the psychic is fully in front, not veiled or not merely emerging, then it would be impossible to cover it up altogether — there could only be at most an upsetting on the surface while within all remained quiet, conscious and devoted.

2 July 1936

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When I called down the Purity from above, the whole being was filled with Peace and Purity and I felt the Mother's Presence in the heart. An intense aspiration rose from the heart, from below, in fact, from all parts of the being. The heart was filled with adoration for the Mother; there was devotion and genuine surrender.

That is one of the most important things for the psychic opening and the inner relation to the Mother.

I pray for Purity and Peace above all. With these I am sure of union with the Mother. Am I not correct?

Yes.

I pray for your observations regarding this psychic experience.
Was it not psychic?

Yes, certainly, it was a psychic opening and at the point emphasised, which is very important — the opening to the higher Purity.

14 July 1937

The Vital Element of Love

As for the *eagerness* to see the Mother, it depends on the nature of the feeling. If there is no demand or claim in it, no dissatisfaction when it is not fulfilled, but only the feeling of the will to see her whenever possible and the joy of seeing her, then it is all right. Of course no trace of anger or jealousy must be there. The vital has also to participate in the sadhana, so the mere fact that there is a vital element does not make the thing wrong, provided it is a vital element of the right kind.

6 December 1931

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Yesterday I found a picture of a pretty peacock, which I cut out and put on the envelope with my letter to the Mother. But in answer Mother sent me an envelope with a picture that seemed meaningless to me. Then I got confused in my thoughts and feelings. I thought, why did the Mother not understand what I wanted to say? Like this I lost connection with the true attitude and felt all wrong and in confusion.

It is again your own misunderstanding that you have erected between yourself and the Mother. The picture-flower which she sent to you in return for your peacock is the pomegranate-flower, the flower of Divine Love and I do not know what better answer you could have expected. Yet merely because you could

not recognise it in its reduced picture form, you jumped to the conclusion that the Mother had not understood you or else that she refused to make any response to you. This with still worse feelings was what you used to do when she was giving flowers and it was because of this violent and ignorant wrong reaction that she had to stop giving flowers to you. How can you expect any answer to your expression when you meet the answer in this way? It is quite true that there is still behind your reaction or associated with it a measure of vital demand and expectation of return and the old want of confidence. The movement may have come from the psychic but around it there was this vital mixture. You must first learn, therefore, to give yourself without demanding a return and you must learn to accept the Mother's action, whatever it may be, without judging it, since it is repeatedly proved that in judging you put an ignorant misconstruction upon it. The inmost being, the psychic, accepts without question, because it has faith in the Divine; by that psychic acceptance the soul opens, the mind clarifies, the vital is purified and enlightened and a spiritual change becomes possible.

3 May 1932

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What you have felt is a revival or return on you of the lower vital with its demands and desires. Its suggestion is, "I am doing the Yoga, but for a price. I have abandoned the life of vital desire and satisfaction, but in order to get intimacy with the Mother — instead of satisfying myself with X and the world, to satisfy myself and get my desires fulfilled by the Divine. If I do not get the intimacy of the Mother and immediately and as I want it, why should I give up the old things?" And as a natural result the old things start again — "X and Y and Y and X and the wrongs of Z." You must see this machinery of the lower vital and dismiss it. It is only by the full psychic relation of self-giving that unity and closeness with the Divine can be maintained — the other is part of the vital ego movement and can only bring a fall of the consciousness and disturbance.

20 June 1933

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It will not do to indulge this restless vital movement. It is not by that that you can have the union with the Mother. You should aspire calmly—eat, sleep, do your work. Peace is the one thing you have to ask for now—it is only on the basis of peace and calm that the true progress and realisation can come. There must be no vital excitement in your seeking or your aspiration towards the Mother.

20 October 1933

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Though I know the Mother is giving me divine things from deep within, my lower nature wants her love and affection to be expressed outwardly. Help me to get rid of this vital demand for some outer expression by the Mother.

That is what you must get rid of—the demand of the vital in the relation with the Mother. It has been the cause of much disturbance and several frictions, for behind it is a claim of the ego. The psychic relation is the true relation, the psychic gives itself without any demand asking only for love and surrender and union with the Divine, and even in that the asking is not a vital demand but an aspiration.

28 November 1933

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Why does one feel so happy after seeing the Mother? The whole day is filled only with her. Is it because the nature of vital love is to feel happy and satisfied when it gets something?

There is no harm in the vital love provided it is purified from all insincerity (e.g. the self-importance etc.) and from all demand. To feel joy in seeing the Mother is all right, but to demand it as a right, to be upset or in revolt or abhiman when it is not given, to be jealous of others who get it—all that is demand and creates an impurity which spoils both the joy and the love.

13 September 1934

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Up to now my effort towards the Self has progressed rapidly, but inside I am dry as an empty coconut shell. When love, emotion, bhakti come, my vital consumes them and leaves my

heart like a desert. Even when there are no vital demands, I hardly feel the Mother's love, though my heart is yearning for it. If the Mother approves, let my psychic be in full activity.

How do you expect the psychic to be in full activity with these things there and not thoroughly rejected? Moreover if the love comes forward in full, what is to prevent the selfish vital taking hold of it and making demand on demand on the Mother which she will certainly refuse to satisfy—as so many have done and afterwards revolted because "the Mother does not love them"—otherwise she would do whatever they want? 2 March 1935

*

When a physical manifestation of the Mother's love is absent, I cannot remain unmoved.

This demand for a physical manifestation of love must go. It is a dangerous stumbling-block in the way of sadhana. A progress made by indulgence of this demand is an insecure progress which may any moment be thrown down by the same force that produced it. 8 October 1935

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I have heard that some ladies have so much love for the Mother that they are even ready to die for her! But they can love her only when she makes a manifestation of her love. This is not, then, a self-existent love—for when the physical love is absent, a few go so far as to revolt, to weep or to fast.

It is self-love that makes them do it. It is just the same kind of vital love that people have outside (loving someone for one's own sake, not for the sake of the beloved). What is the use of that in sadhana here? It can only be an obstacle.

15 October 1935

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It is not possible for my sadhana to go on without devotion and love. I am ready to give up desires and demands if that will put me on the side of love and devotion.

Love and devotion depend on the opening of the psychic and for that the desires must go. The vital love offered by many to the Mother instead of the psychic love brings more disturbance than anything else because it is coupled with desire.

8 September 1936

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If you have no abhiman against the Mother, that also is surely very desirable. Abhiman, disturbance, etc. may be signs of life but of a vital, not of the inner life. They must quiet down and give room for the inner life. At first the result may be a neutral quiet, but one has often to pass through that to arrive at a more positive new consciousness.

2 January 1937

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Why am I suffering? Why am I so far from the Mother? How can I get over this?

Reject the suffering. Reject every vital movement that would take you away from the Mother.

Cling close to her always with your inner being — without demand or question, in perfect faith.

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There are always in a sadhak two sides of the nature, one that wants the Divine, the other that wants only its own way and will and expects the Divine to satisfy it. When you were in the first, the Mother was always close to you and you were happy; when you indulged the second, then all went wrong. Your mistake recently has been to indulge this second part too much. But you can always recover the constant closeness of the Mother in your inner being and happiness and progress in the sadhana. But to do so you must make it a point to give your love without asking for anything at all except the inner nearness — for unless you do that very strongly, it will be difficult for you to get rid of the other tendency and change the demanding vital part in you.

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We find that by meeting the Mother or being in her presence we come out of depression and experience the ecstasy of joy. Does this take place by a psychic meeting or a meeting on the inner vital level?

It depends on whether it comes by drawing vital force from her or simply by the joy of seeing her or by receiving something from her. In the two latter cases it is usually psychic or psychic-vital, in the former it is vital.

Devotion or Bhakti for the Mother

When the Mother looked at me this evening from the terrace, I felt a deep upsurge of devotion towards her. It is this I have hungered for, and so long as I feel this bhakti I feel as though I have little else to desire. Grant that I may have the *ahaitukī bhakti*. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that the desire for bhakti is not a desire at all. So I trust I am not making any bargain by desiring it—as bhakti is of the essence of the Divine, to ask for it must be legitimate, no?

The desire for the Divine or of bhakti for the Divine is the one desire which can free one from all the others—at the core it is not a desire, but an aspiration, a soul need, the breath of existence of the inmost being and as such it cannot be counted among desires.

28 December 1932

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How can I have pure bhakti for the Mother?

Pure worship, adoration, love for the Divine without claim or demand is what is called *śuddha bhakti*.

From which part does it manifest?

From the psychic.

How can I unravel the confusion I feel between self, mind, vital and physical, and how to distinguish them?

One has to separate oneself in thought from mind and vital and body and look at these as not oneself but only outer instruments or movements of nature. In the end one begins to be aware of something behind them which is the real self, the true being.

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Is psychic bhakti perfect devotion?

It is the basis of perfect devotion.

How can I develop psychic bhakti?

By sincere aspiration.

What is the character of psychic bhakti, mental bhakti and vital bhakti for the Mother? How to recognise them?

The psychic is made up of love and self-giving without demand, the vital of the will to be possessed by the Mother and serve her, the mental of faith and unquestioning acceptance of all that the Mother is, says and does. These however are outside signs — it is in inner character quite recognisable but not to be put into words that they differ.

Is there no place for mental and vital devotion in this Yoga?

Who says there is not? So long as it is real devotion, all bhakti has a place.

28 April 1933

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It is always a mistake to attach importance to what others say — it is enough to have true devotion and the right attitude towards the Mother. You need have no apprehension of this kind at all.

28 April 1933

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How to get pure and complete devotion?

Get quiet first — then from the quietude aspire and open yourself quietly and sincerely to the Mother. 15 November 1933

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Mother, in spite of my thousand and three imperfections, this one sense remains in me — that you are my mother, that I am born from your heart. It is the only truth I seem to have realised in all these six years, but I thank you very much that I have been enabled to feel this much at least.

It is an excellent foundation for the other truths that are to come — for they all result from it. 17 September 1934

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My meetings with the Mother, instead of being occasions for giving and receiving love, joy and happiness, bring fear! There must be something wrong in my nature.

It is the old vital with its ego which comes up again and again. It refuses to follow the higher being and be as the true bhaktas are who ask nothing and are content with all that the Mother does or does not do, because whatever she does must be good, since she is the Mother. You must impose the truth on this vital part. 6 May 1935

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Do not allow mental anxiety to harass you. Wait on the working of the Mother's force which will open the lotus of the heart. In the light from above devotion will blossom in you.

25 October 1936

Consecration to the Mother

Sometimes when I sit in meditation, I say "Ma — Ma — Ma." Then everything becomes quiet and I feel great peace inside and outside me. Even in the atmosphere around me, I hear "Ma — Ma — Ma." Is this real or is it only echoes?

The atmosphere you carry around you is part of your consciousness as much as the rest that you feel inside you. When you

repeat the name of the Mother, it begins to echo in all your consciousness, outside as well as inside you. What you experience therefore is quite true and it is a good experience.

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When I asked what attitude I should hold during the silence of the mind, you replied, "Consecration." Please explain this to me in a wider sense.

It means the devoting of all that comes to you, all your experiences and progress to the Mother.

What should I do to keep the silence alert and constant while reading, talking and working.

The same thing — do all with a quiet mind, not throwing yourself out in what you do, but seeing quietly what is done and what happens.

16 January 1934

The Mother's Love

There is no need to ask for pardon, for the Mother has not in the least been angry or displeased with you. You may be sure of her love always.

29 September 1933

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No more shall I seek signs of the Mother's love in an outward way. What difference does it make if she touches me a little or more or does not touch me at all? If the love is received properly within, that alone is the true thing. If it is not received or if it is diffused or dispersed or misdirected after receiving it, that is like throwing pearls before swine.

Yes, that is the truth and it is the attitude every sadhak should take.

8 May 1934

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We all want Mother's love, but I wonder how many of us truly love the Mother. Where indeed do we see one-pointed,

ever-sacrificing, never-failing love? Who has love only for the Divine?

It does not mean that there is no love, but that the love is mixed up and covered with egoism, demand and vital movements. At least that is the case with many. There are some of course who have no love at all, or “love” — if it can be called so — only for what they get, one or two who love truly — but in a great many there is a psychic spark hidden in much smoke. The smoke has to be got rid of so that the spark may have a chance of growing into a blaze.

9 November 1934

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Do not think whether people agree with you or do not agree with you or whether you are good or bad, but think only that “the Mother loves me and I am the Mother’s.” If you base your life on that thought, everything will soon become easy.

30 April 1935

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It is because of the thoughts about others and your “badness” that you feel far from the Mother. All the time she is very near to you and you to her. If you take the position I told you and make it the basis of your life, “the Mother loves me and I am hers”, the curtain would soon disappear, for it is made of these thoughts and nothing else.

1 May 1935

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The Mother loves because she is Love and cannot but love.
Still, we feel that she cannot love as we do, and on our part
we cannot bear the constancy and wideness of her Love.

Obviously, if people expect the ordinary kind of love from the Mother they must be disappointed — the love based on the vital and its moods. But that is just the kind of love that has to be overpassed in Yoga or transformed into something else.

14 March 1936

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Certainly, it is not necessary for you to become “good” in order that the Mother may give you her love. Her love is always there and the imperfections of human nature do not count against that love. The only thing is that you must become aware of it always there. For that it is necessary for the psychic to come in front — for the psychic knows, while the mind, vital and physical look only at surface appearances and misinterpret them. It is that for which the Mother’s force is working, and whenever the psychic comes near the surface, you have felt love and nearness coming up. But it needs time to prepare the other parts so that they also may know and feel. Therefore the patience is necessary and the confidence that through all the delays and difficulties of the sadhana the Mother is leading you and will surely lead you home to her.

24 June 1936

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X is probably making two mistakes — first, expecting outward expressions of love from the Mother; second, looking for progress instead of concentrating on openness and surrender without demand of a return. These are two mistakes which sadhaks are constantly making. If one opens, if one surrenders, then as soon as the nature is ready, progress will come of itself; but the personal concentration for progress brings difficulties and resistance and disappointment because the mind is not looking at things from the right angle. The Mother has a special kindness for X and every day at Pranam she is trying to put a sustaining force upon him. He must learn to be very quiet in mind and vital and consecrate himself so that he may become conscious as well as receive. The Divine Love, unlike the human, is deep and vast and silent; one must become quiet and wide to be aware of it and reply to it. He must make it his whole object to be surrendered so that he may become a vessel and instrument — leaving it to the Divine Wisdom and Love to fill him with what is needed. Let him also fix this in the mind not to insist that in a given time he must progress, develop, get realisations and experiences — whatever time it takes, he must be prepared to wait and persevere and make his whole life an

aspiration and an opening for the one thing only, the Divine. To give oneself is the secret of sadhana, not to demand and acquire a thing. The more one gives oneself, the more the power to receive will grow. But for that all impatience and revolt must go; all suggestions of not getting, not being helped, not being loved, of going away, of abandoning life or the spiritual endeavour must be rejected.

1 September 1936

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As for the feelings about the Mother and that her love is only given for a return in work or to those who can do sadhana well, that is the usual senseless idea of the vital-physical mind and has no value.

17 January 1937

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It is not Mother who makes you cry. It is forces from the vital Nature that make you sorrowful and think of dying and of the past. What comes from Mother is love and light and peace and joy and the spiritual life of the future.

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Never mind about the purity of the body. The love of the Mother purifies both heart and body—if the soul's aspiration is there, the body also is pure. What happened in the past does not in the least matter.

Inner Union and Outer Relation with the Mother

Some part or parts of my being seem to be trying to live in the Mother all the time, and to leave the other parts completely in the hands of the Mother's Force.

That did not succeed in the past.

I mean “live” not in an impersonal sense, but live into her very manifested physical form. In such a case, is it still necessary to aspire for bringing down her Force?

I do not know how you are going to *live into* the manifested physical form. To live in the Mother's consciousness even to the physical with the manifested form as the centre of this unity is possible. Perhaps you mean that? But how are you going to do that if the other parts are left to remain as they are? They will go on pulling you out of the true consciousness as they do now. And how are they to be changed if the Mother's Force is not there in them to change them?

14 January 1936

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It is true that the Mother is one in many forms, but the distinction between the outer and the inner Mother must not be made too trenchant; for she is not only one, but the physical Mother contains all the others in herself and in her is established the communication between the inner and the outer existence. But to know the outer Mother truly one must know what is within her and not look at the outer appearances only. That is only possible if one meets her with the inner being and grows into her consciousness — those who seek an outer relation only cannot do that.

10 August 1936

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The spiritual union must begin from within and spread out from there; it cannot be based on anything exterior — for, if so based, the union cannot be spiritual or real. That is the great mistake which so many make here: they put the whole emphasis on the external vital or physical relation with the Mother, insist on a vital interchange or else physical contact and when they do not get it to their satisfaction, enter into all kinds of disturbances, revolt, doubt, depression. This is a wrong viewpoint altogether and has caused much obstruction and trouble. The mind, vital, physical can participate and are intended to participate in the union, but for that they must be submitted to the psychic, themselves psychised; the union must be an essentially psychic and spiritual union spreading out to the mind, vital and physical. Even the physical must be able to feel invisibly the Mother's closeness, her concrete presence — then alone can the union be truly based

and completed and then alone can any physical closeness or contact find its true value and fulfil its spiritual purpose. Till then any physical contact is of value only so far as it helps the inner sadhana, but how much can be given and what will help or hinder, the Mother only can judge, the sadhak cannot be the judge—he will be led away by the desires and lower vital ego, as so many have been in fact. Such means of help by physical contact as the Mother had established have been largely spoiled by the sadhaks' misuse of them, the wrong attitude of which I have spoken. When the vital demand is there with its claims and revolts and takes the desire for the exterior contact or closeness as a cause or occasion for these things, then it becomes a serious hindrance to the development of the inner union, it does not help at all. The sadhaks always imagine in their ignorance that when the Mother sees more of one person than of another, it is because of personal preference and that she is giving more love and help to that person. That is altogether a mistake. Physical closeness and contact can be a severe ordeal for the sadhak; it may raise the vital demands, claims, jealousies etc. to a high pitch; it may on the other hand leave him satisfied with an outer relation without making any serious effort for the inner union; or it becomes for him something mechanical, because ordinary and familiar, and for any inner purpose quite ineffective—these things are not only possible but have happened in many cases. The Mother knows that and her arrangements in this matter are therefore dictated by quite other reasons than those which are attributed to her.

The only safe thing is to concentrate on the inner union foremost and altogether, to make that the one thing to be achieved and to leave aside all claims and demands for anything external, remaining satisfied with what the Mother gives and relying wholly on her wisdom and solicitude. It ought to be quite evident that a desire which raises revolt, doubt, depression, desperate struggles cannot be a true part of the spiritual movement. If your mind tells you that it is the right thing, then surely you must distrust the mind's suggestions. Concentrate entirely on the one thing needful and put away, if they come, all ideas and

forces that want to disturb it or make you deviate. The vital assent to these things has to be overcome, but for that the first thing is to refuse all mental assent, for the mental support gives them a greater force than they would otherwise have. Fix the right attitude in the mind and the deeper emotional being—cling to that when contrary forces arise and by your firmness in that psychic attitude repel them.

14 March 1937

Relation with the Mother and with Others

I feel hurt when somebody tells me I am doing something wrong in my sadhana. I get restless and depressed. But today by the Mother's compassion, I can see that I have been childish and stupid. Is my experience true?

You ought to train yourself not to mind what people say—for what they say is also childish and stupid. Your sadhana—and your life also—lies between you and the Mother; other people do not matter.

23 March 1933

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I have a deep regard for X and an inner affection for him. Now when I begin to meditate by thinking of the Mother, I sometimes see him meditating with us. This brings a happy feeling, yet I worry lest it should bring any harm in my sadhana. I hope it will not bring trouble.

If you bring somebody in between you and the Mother, it is bound to give trouble.

5 April 1933

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It was your mistake to listen to what people say about you and X and Y and attach any value to their foolish chatter. X did not grow serious with you because of that. He was puzzled by your change of manner, the stiffness of your attitude towards him and your apparently diminished interest in the work. It is what the Mother says that is true and matters and not what people say; if you listen to what people say, you will lose touch with the Mother's consciousness. It is because of that that these thoughts

have come back on you about your badness and the rest of it. The Mother had told you to work freely with X; she told you that his influence was good for you, and for many days you had peace and joy and freedom from the restless mind and you had the psychic opening. Now you must go back to that and do as you were doing before. Turn to the Mother only and let her consciousness and her will work in you. Then you will recover what you had got, silence the mind and be free. 29 April 1933

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X would like to have a “pure” relation with me, a relation of quiet friendliness. But when I look within, I find always the same answer in the heart—no more relation of any kind with anyone, except the one, sole relation with the Mother, an undivided devotion of all of myself solely to the Mother. The vital clamours for relation, but let it. The one who speaks within has only an unmixed aspiration for union with the Mother. I shall follow whatever guidance you give me.

To be turned wholly to the Mother and have nothing but friendly relations with the sadhaks, the same for all, is a counsel of perfection; but not many can carry it out—hardly one here and there. Yet to have that in tendency is to have the real turn towards the one-pointedness of sadhana; but people take time to arrive at it.

12 July 1935

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Yes, it is the thing to be attained—not to receive any other influences than the Divine, as human nature ordinarily does. Then under the sole influence of the Mother’s Light and Force, all that has to be changed in the nature can be quietly and smoothly changed, all that has to be developed can be developed without disturbance or trouble.

3 June 1936

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The direct relation with the Mother is always open to you and it is there whenever you can feel it; for it is a thing of the inner being. Whenever you go deep within yourself you find it; it has

to come out and govern the outer nature and life. That is why I want you to give time for going inside and for inner progress in the sadhana. The relation with X which the Mother thought of establishing was of two friends and fellow workers in her work, it was never intended that she should be between you and the Mother. In Y's case there was a help to be given to you so that you might not be carried away by the attacks from which you suffered and might have time and support till you could reach a point at which you could seek the Mother's presence within you and with you. That you can do now and there is no reason why anyone should be asked to intervene in any way — our work is directly in you and upon you and not through anyone.

22 December 1936

False Suggestions of the Mother's Displeasure

It is not surprising that you could not find out what you had done to make the Mother change her attitude towards you, and this for two good reasons, — first, that you had done nothing, and, second, that the Mother's feeling for you and her attitude had not changed at all — *not in any smallest respect, not in the least shadow of a degree*. She has the same care and love as she always had and during the last few days of which you speak, they were not clouded for a moment.

Then you ask, if so, why do I feel like this or like that? I can only answer that, in their origin, these were not your own feelings at all, but rather ideas, impressions, impulses pushed into your lower vital from outside; your mistake has been to admit them and identify them as your own — from want of knowledge and experience in these matters. There are certain vital forces of this lower vital plane that are constantly wandering about the Asram and trying to push their movements now on one, now on another, now on several at a time. The processus is always the same. First, suggestions: the Mother has done this or not done that, she has said this or not said that, she has had this or that thought about me or feeling towards me, she is displeased with me, unfair to me, partial to others etc. etc.;

next, discouragement, wounded feelings, jealousy, despondency, revolt or any other kindred vital downfall or upheaval; result, the impulse to withdraw from the Mother, not to give her flowers or take flowers, to go away from soup or Pranam, not to come there, to shut oneself away from her altogether, to give up the Yoga, to go away—or worse. I give you the whole round in its ground plan, omitting many variations, so that you may be on your guard the next time these suggestions try to come. If you don't want to be misled by them and to go through much quite groundless and unnecessary disturbance and trouble, you must recognise them immediately they come, cast them out by the neck or break their backs as you would a snake's.

For they are in their nature not only irrational, but strongly mechanical. Irrational, because they have no true ground in reality. They are ready enough to seize on some (usually trifling) outward appearances and twist them this way or that in order to convince the easily deceived physical mind; they will even create circumstances and make them appear to have that colour. But if they cannot find or create, they will go on just as merrily with no other ground than imaginations or impressions which they persuade their victims to take for realities. And they are mechanical because, once they can make the mind their field, they always recur with the same inevitable round of suggestions, the same ideas, the same feelings, the same impulses, the same actions in consequence. It is like a recurrent illness with always the same series of symptoms and the same "course". And the object is always the same, to create a distance between the sadhak and the Mother and so to break the sadhana. It is a great mistake to think, as some do, that the Mother in such cases pushes the sadhaka away from her; on the contrary, it is he who pushes her away from him under the influence of these forces and believes all the time—for they have a great power of blinding the mind and clouding the judgment—that she is to blame.

To show how these suggestions mislead once one starts listening to them, I may instance the matter of your sister's letters. The Mother and I have always accepted without reservation your sister's coming and neither today nor at any other time had

she the least idea in her mind against it. On the contrary, when you came in the midst of a hard and trying morning, she gave you full time, heard all you had to say, made her own suggestions and gave her full acquiescence. What more could she have done? And yet you have this suggestion made to you that she does not really want, that she is not frank, that she is cold to you about the matter. Why? Precisely because there was this predisposing influence at work on the lookout for any pretext to mislead you, — any, even less than a shadow's shadow.

I must ask you therefore to dismiss this kind of suggestion, these feelings and all the cycle in future the moment they try to come. Never mind what circumstances or justifications they may allege. Nothing is more dangerous than the inferences of the physical mind trying to build up conclusions upon outward appearances — they have nine chances out of ten of being false. One must learn to distrust hasty conclusions from surface appearances — is not that the first condition of true knowledge? — and learn to see and know things from within.

You ask how to stem these movements? To begin with, observe three rules:

(1) Keep always confidence in the Mother's care and love — trust in them and distrust every suggestion, every appearance that seems to contradict.

(2) Reject immediately every feeling, every impulse that makes you draw back from the Mother — such as that about the Pranam — from your true relation with her, from inner nearness, from a simple and straightforward confidence in her.

(3) Do not lay too much stress on outward signs — your observation of them may easily mislead you. Keep yourself open to her and feel with your heart — the inner heart, not the surface vital desire, but the heart of true emotion, — then you are more likely to find her and be always near her in your self and receive what constantly she is working to give you.

27 June 1931

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When I see the Mother in the evening, I notice that some being in me is trying to bring catastrophes, such as the idea, "Mother

does not look at you", even though she may be looking at me. This has become very common. I always try my best to reject it, but still it comes constantly and forcibly and makes my consciousness disordered. I pray that the Mother may remove it. What is this being — is it vital?

Yes, it is a being of falsehood from the vital world which tries to make one take its false suggestions for the truth and disturb the consciousness, and get it to leave the straight path and either get depressed or turned against the Mother. If you reject and refuse to listen or believe always, it will disappear.

30 March 1933

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All these [*suggestions of ill treatment, severity, lack of support*] are the mere ravings of the vital Force that attacks the mind with its lying suggestions until it succeeds in getting the sadhak to turn away from the Mother and against her. There is a part of the vital that accepts it, luxuriates in an exaggerated misery and suggestions of personal tragedy and catastrophe, the blame for which it wants to lay on the Divine. If you want to get rid of these attacks, it is this part of your vital being that you must change, its acceptance of these false suggestions, its want of fortitude in facing the difficulties of the sadhana. If you refused to indulge this vital tamasic tendency and the voices of darkness that come with it, there would be no such violent ups and downs in the sadhana.

24 January 1934

*

It is of course the resistance of the old vital in the past that is being redeemed which creates this irritation and these imaginations about the Mother's displeasure. For as a matter of fact there was no dissatisfaction against you in the Mother's mind and this idea is usually a suggestion to the sadhak's mind from the Force that wants to create the wish to go or any other kind of discontent or depression. It is a curious form of delusion that has taken root, as it were, in the Asram atmosphere and is cherished not so much by the individual vital as by the forces that work upon it to break, if possible, the sadhana. You must not allow any

harborage to that or else it will create any amount of trouble. The absence of proper sleep naturally brings a state of fatigue in the nerves which helps these things to come — for it is through the physical consciousness that they attack and if it can make that consciousness tamasic in any way, their entry is more easy.

15 September 1936

*

The Mother has in no way changed towards you nor is she disappointed with you — that is the suggestion drawn from your own state of mind and putting its wrong sense of disappointment and unfitness on to the Mother. She has no reason to change or be disappointed, as she has always been aware of the vital obstacles in you and still expected and expects you to overcome them. The call to change certain things that seem to be in the grain of character is proving difficult even for the best sadhaks, but the difficulty is no proof of incompetence. It is precisely this impulse to go that you must refuse to admit — for so long as these forces think they can bring it about, they will press as much as they can on this point. You must also open yourself more to the Mother's Force in that part and for that it is necessary to get rid of this suggestion about the Mother's disappointment or lack of love, for it is this which creates the reaction at the time of Pranam. Our help, support, love are there always as before — keep yourself open to them and with their aid drive out these suggestions.

26 January 1937

Nearness to the Mother and Progress in Sadhana

“Early” or “late” has nothing to do with what you call nearness. Some who were “early” — and also some who are “near” to her see the Mother only at “pranam” time — physically; some who are late, have the occasion to see her every day because their work compels it. But they see her because of the work; the work was not given to them in order that they might be near! You have taken the thing by the wrong end — not for the first time.

You are mistaken in thinking that you are the only one to

ask with such persistence — there are others. Each one calls it a need, but when their “need” is freely given to them, they cease to value it — as happened with the soup and the pranam. And this shows that it is not a need, but a desire. The principle of all sadhana is to fix the will not on desires — even if presented to the mind as needs — but on the realisation only.

Our object is the supramental realisation and we have to do whatever is necessary for that or towards that under the conditions of each stage. At present the necessity is to prepare the physical consciousness; for that a complete equality and peace and a complete dedication free from personal demand or desire in the physical and the lower vital parts is the thing to be established. Other things can come in their proper time. What is the real need now is not insistence on physical nearness, which is one of those other things, but the psychic opening in the physical consciousness and the constant presence and guidance there.

I do not know what you mean by our wanting to use you for all practical purposes. We did not insist on your doing any work for us; it was you who asked for work, and we gave you what could be found for you. But we could not very well invent work with the express purpose of creating an occasion for physically meeting the Mother. That has not been done for anybody.

16 February 1932

*

As usual, all you have written in the letter under the wrong influence is based either on false inferences or a wrong attitude.

It is quite false that the Mother gives your letters or X's or those of others to Y to read. The letters and books are read and kept not by the Mother, but by me; it is I who read them to the Mother, put by those that are done with in my files and return the books and the answers which are sent immediately I have finished with them through Nolini. Other things like Y seeing your envelopes on a table etc. are mere trifles with no harm in them; if you twist and exaggerate and put a dark meaning on every harmless trifle and erect it into a grievance and a torture, how do you expect to have any quiet or peace or progress in the sadhana?

As for the advantages given to Y by her working here and seeing and speaking with the Mother being an injustice to you and a sacrifice of you to her development, she might equally complain, and most of the people in the Asram might complain that they are not allowed to send a book to Sri Aurobindo every second day and get an answer from him and a constant outward help, but are left out in the cold and an unjust partiality is being shown by him and they are being sacrificed to the development of Z [*the correspondent*]. These jealous recriminations are foolish and stupid in the extreme. I therefore hope that this is the last time you entertain them and that consequently, as you say, it may be the last time you write them. If you can clear this out of you, there will be some chance of the liberation of your physical consciousness and a straight progress in the sadhana.

4 September 1932

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People say that the sadhaks whom the Mother calls for interview now and then, and the sadhaks to whom she sends things personally, are those who are very close to her and they progress rapidly in every way. What is the truth in this?

It is all nonsense. Some of the best sadhaks are among those whom the Mother seldom or never calls and she sends them nothing. Nor do they expect it—they feel the Mother always with them and are satisfied and ask for nothing else.

27 July 1933

*

Is there any special effect of physical nearness to the Mother?

It is indispensable for the fullness of the sadhana on the physical plane. Transformation of the physical and external being is not possible otherwise.

Is it not likely that with more outer nearness and familiarity with the Mother, there may be less inner growth of consciousness and perhaps less aspiration?

It depends on the person. Some profit, some do not. No general statement can be made.

Is it possible to receive the Mother's help at a great distance — say Bombay or Calcutta — almost in the same way as here in the Asram?

One can receive everywhere, and if there is a strong spiritual consciousness one can make great progress. But experience does not support the idea that it makes no difference or is almost the same.

18 August 1933

*

I want to be close to the Mother. If I was close to her, the hostile forces would not attack me.

You are quite mistaken. Among those who are physically near the Mother there are some who have much worse attacks than you have ever had. It is the inner nearness that saves, not the physical nearness.

17 November 1933

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It is the inner nearness that matters. The idea of the mind — quite natural, of course — that the outer closeness is the sign of the relation or a special favour or the means of rapid progress is not borne out by experience. There are some who see the Mother daily and are very little advanced from what they were years ago — there were others who got worse because it fostered the vital demand in them — on the other hand there are some quite close to the Mother and forward on the path and cherished by her who come to her only very occasionally — and I could instance one case in which there is an interview only once a year, yet there is no one who has made more rapid progress or in whom the love relation has grown to a greater intensity and fervour. In all these things it is best to have an entire confidence in the Mother and the light that guides her.

10 December 1933

*

One who is called to see the Mother often is fortunate because then one gets a chance to talk with her and to receive more Light in her presence. Is it not so?

No. It depends entirely on the condition of the person and his attitude. Especially, if they insist on seeing her or on remaining when she wants them to go or are in a bad mood and throw it on her, it is very harmful for them to see her. Each should be content with what the Mother gives them, for she alone feels what they can or cannot receive. Mental constructions of this kind and vital demands are always false.

3 April 1934

*

If one has the close inner relation, one feels the Mother always near and within and round and there is no insistence on the closer physical relation for its own sake. Those who have not this, should aspire for it and not hanker after the other. If they get the outer closeness, they will find that it means nothing without the inner oneness and closeness. One may be physically near the Mother and yet as far from her as the Sahara desert.

11 June 1934

*

My dissatisfaction and inner struggle are constant. My eyes are constantly on the outer nearness of the Mother, of which I have none at the moment, and I am left out completely.

And if you had the physical nearness, you would be no happier or calmer so long as the inner being is unchanged. Those who do physically approach her have just the same difficulties and struggles as yourself and some have not even the experiences of peace etc. that you have.

Since all this is in me, it has been expressed. Now let it burn into ashes, never to rise again.

It would be most foolish to call back this meaningless delusion — for nothing can be farther from the actual and practical truth than to suppose that those who have a physical nearness to the

Mother or have frequent physical approach are happier or more satisfied than others; it is not in the least true — or to allow it to prevent the progress of the inner peace. If you could only get rid of this delusion, nothing would be able to prevent the growth of the Peace and that inner nearness which alone makes people in this Asram divinely happy. Happiness comes from the soul's satisfaction, not from the vital's or the body's. The vital is never satisfied; the body soon ceases to be moved at all by what it easily or always has. Only the psychic being brings the real joy and felicity.

8 September 1934

*

I have completely recovered from the bad effect caused by the suggestion that the Mother was not seeing me enough. Now I am in peace.

As you have recovered, I do not write anything about that, for discourse on such matters does not help. The one thing important is to keep the inner attitude and establish the inner connection with the Mother independent of all outward circumstances; it is that that brings all that is needed. Those who are most deep in the Yoga are not those who physically see most of the Mother. There are some who are in constant nearness or union with her who apart from the Pranam and the evening meditation come to her only once a year.

13 November 1934

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Those are the Mother's children and closest to her who are open to her, close to her in their inner being, one with her will — not those who come bodily nearest to her. Did coming inside help X or Y? It is impossible for Mother to satisfy the demands of everybody, the external demands — it only wears out her body but helps no one.

25 December 1934

*

While at the staircase I got an intense desire to see the Mother's rooms. X suggested that when one is in difficulty, one should ask to go near to the Mother.

But the coming near to the Mother should be in the inner rooms, not the outer. For in the inner rooms one can always enter and even arrange to stay there permanently.

28 January 1935

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X showed me a copy of your letter to Y in which you say: "Those are the Mother's children and closest to her who are open to her, close to her in their inner being, one with her will—not those who come bodily nearest to her." But have not those who are bodily nearest come nearest because they were already "open to her", "one with her will" and "close to her in their inner being"? And are there not certain special advantages of this bodily nearness?

It is not so easy to be "one with the will" of the Mother or to be entirely open. To be bodily close imposes a constant pressure for progress, for perfection, which no one yet has been able to meet. People have romantic ideas in this matter which are not true.

7 March 1935

*

If one does not take care of one's ego from the beginning, it may develop into a strong spiritual ego which says, "I am progressing wonderfully; the Grace is with me. I am the Mother's instrument more than others." It may demand that the Mother show some special Grace to it. This ego wants to show others that "Mother loves me more than all of you", and it wants a physical manifestation of her love.

You are quite right. It is the ego that wants the satisfaction of being the first or specially singled out. It is this egoistic vital demand with all its consequent revolts and disturbances that made it necessary for Mother to limit the physical manifestation of nearness to a minimum.

17 April 1935

*

Whatever you may say to suppress our desire for the Mother's nearness . . .

If one has the desire or the claim, one brings in all sorts of

demands, anger, jealousies, despairs, revolts etc., which spoil the sadhana and do not help it. To others the nearness becomes a mixture.

I find that people are greatly fortunate who can approach the Mother often.

If they know how to approach her which hardly any do.

If you say that there is always an interchange going on between people . . .

A vital interchange. But there is a difference between the interchange of "people" and interchange with Mother.

surely one who often comes to Mother, will automatically take something precious from her.

And what if their condition is such that it merely passes or is spilt or is spoilt by their reactions?

And this is the easiest way of receiving.

If they know how to receive.

The Mother was giving freely of her physical contact in former years. If the sadhaks had had the right reactions, do you think she would have drawn back and reduced it to a minimum? Of course if people know in what spirit to receive from her, the physical touch is a great thing—but for that the constant physical nearness is not necessary. That rather creates a pressure of the highest force which how many can meet and satisfy?

22 April 1935

*

Why should X complain when he knows full well that he can have Mother's contact for an hour and be near her for two hours more? He has no need of writing or receiving letters from her. Or maybe he understands Mother better on account of his long contact with her.

I am afraid all these are mental constructions. You are constructing in your mind what X ought to feel. But as a matter of fact neither X's nor anybody's difficulties are removed by their coming to Mother or by their sitting one hour or two hours or even three hours with her. Plenty of people have done that and gone away as glum, desperate and revolted as they came. Among the people who see the Mother are some who have crises as bad as yours and as frequent. It is also not true that those who have talked much with Mother (about houses, repairs, servants etc.) understand her better. In former days some people used to see much of Mother in another way, i.e. to talk with her on all sorts of subjects—but even those did not really understand her. I repeat that all that is mental building and constructed inference and does not square with the facts. It is only when one is inwardly open to her that one profits by the "contact" with her, not the physical but the spiritual or inner contact, and then the mere thought of her or a mere thought from her can set right anything wrong; then the physical contact also can help, but it is not indispensable. And as for understanding her, it is only by entering into the spiritual consciousness that one can understand her, or if not understand in the mind, at least feel and respond to what she is through an increasing oneness.

4 August 1935

*

To come physically to the Mother for getting rid of a disturbance is unnecessary and useless; it is inwardly that you must take refuge in her and throw away the wrong movement, as you have seen on this occasion. To come physically would only create a habit of getting wrong and coming to her to get right and it would also lead to the wrong movement of throwing the difficulty on her instead of inwardly giving it up, making its surrender. But it is the general surrender that is needed which would prevent these useless disturbances over trifling matters, egoisms, insistences on one's own point of view, anger because one does not have one's own way or a due recognition of one's independence or importance. It is these feelings disguised by reasonings and self-justification that are at the bottom of more

than half of the difficulty in the work of the Asram.

18 May 1936

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Is it true that the Mother is taking away her physical nearness from us because our inner closeness to her is increasing, so there is no need of outer closeness?

The Mother has for a long time past been limiting the outer contact with the sadhaks as much as possible. The reason you speak of is one of the reasons, but there are others which it is not necessary to speak of.

27 July 1936

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How is it that X so easily finds defects in Y's work and Y seems to be glad when I criticise X? If those who have an opportunity to be with the Mother for half an hour daily have not been able to have a fine, affectionate harmony, what to say of others?

X has not the opportunity you speak of; he sees [*the Mother*] only for a minute or two in the morning when taking back his daily report. But in fact it is a mistake to think that those who meet the Mother physically are any nearer the goal of perfection than those who do not meet her except at Pranam and meditation. All depends on the inner being and how it can meet her from within and receive her force and profit by it. Of course, if people meet her with their psychic prominent, and not with the outer consciousness only, it should be different, but —

29 July 1936

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You have said that those who are doing sadhana outside the Asram cannot do it fully — the daily touch and nearness of the Mother, gained by living in the Asram, alone can bring a possibility of transformation. Carrying this idea a little further, it naturally follows that those who live nearer to the Mother and meet her more often are of the inner circle, and even outwardly are more intimate, that is, nearer transformation. Q.E.D.?

Living in the Asram is one thing, living with the Mother in close proximity is another. Your Q.E.D., like most mental logic, is contradicted by the facts of life. One could argue on that basis that *A* who lives in the same house as the Mother is nearer perfection than *B* and much nearer than *C* or *D* who live outside. *D* never meets the Mother except at Pranam and on her birthday, so she must be an utterly backward person and *E* who meets the Mother daily for 5, 10, 15 or 20 minutes must be far ahead of her, well on towards perfection. But these things are not so. So the argument breaks down at every point. Progress in sadhana or superior capacity is not dependent on one's being near the Mother or meeting her more often. Q.E.D.

30 July 1936

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There is a confusion here. The Mother's grace is one thing, the call to change another, the pressure of nearness to her is yet another. Those who are physically near to her are not so by any special grace or favour, but by the necessity of their work,—that is what everybody here refuses to understand or believe, but it is the fact: that nearness acts automatically as a pressure, if for nothing else, to adapt their consciousness to hers which means change, but it is difficult for them because the difference between the two consciousnesses is enormous especially on the physical level and it is on the physical level that they are meeting her in the work.

27 April 1944

*

I have a great desire to see the Mother. Why is she not allowing me to do so? Please tell me, what is the value of my desire?

There is more profit to be had by being open to the Mother than by coming physically to her at the present stage. Some even who make a point of her calling them go backward rather than forward—because they make a point of it, introducing thus a basis of vital demand which makes a very shaky foundation for relations with the Mother.

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Although the Mother is looking after me well, I feel that she is keeping me away from her. I feel as if covered in egoism and darkness. I ask her forgiveness for past mistakes.

You are mistaken in thinking that the Mother keeps you at a distance; you have only to open yourself to her sincerely and entirely. What has been done in the past does not matter if there is a sincere aspiration and resolution to change. Neither to lament nor to complain or be angry will help; a confident and happy opening of oneself to the Mother without insistence on personal demands and desires is the only thing to do.

Closeness to the Mother and Speaking French

Is it right to say that those who know French will be able to serve the Mother better in the years to come?

It is mostly that it brings a certain closeness to one side of the Mother.

3 May 1945

Special Relation with the Mother

I did not agree to your going for the same reasons as the last time. First, there was no good reason why you should go; a fit of quite causeless jealousy and pique could not be considered a sufficient ground for your wanting to leave us. You started your “revolt”, as you call it, because the Mother took X to a private sale to buy things for her: you continued it because the next day (it being the first of the month) and the day after she was too busy with accounts and other affairs to occupy herself with you as you wanted. There could not be more absurd grounds for wanting to go away.

What you seem to claim from the Mother is impossible. No one can be given the right to control or question her actions and decisions or to dictate whom she must or must not take with her or what time she shall give to one or another. The Mother can do her work only if she is free always to do what she sees to be right and her decisions are accepted by all concerned. This is

now generally understood in the Asram and no one makes this kind of demand; it is not possible that you alone out of eighty people should have the right to do it.

In fact, you have been given privileges of close daily personal contact with the Mother which very few in the Asram have and which all would be only too glad to have. It is not because you have a greater claim than theirs. If it were a matter of ordinary claim, there are many who would precede you. Some have been here since the beginning; some are more advanced than most in the spiritual life; some occupy a responsible position in the work of the Asram; yet many of them cannot come to the Mother separately every morning or meet her again in the afternoon as you have been allowed to do. This privilege was given you because she felt that you had a special need of her care and of help and support from her. For she does not act for her personal satisfaction or decide out of personal preference, but according to the necessities of the work and the true need of each one in the Asram. And she gave you as much as she could consistently with the call of her work and the time at her disposal. But instead of being satisfied and happy, you create in your mind flimsy grounds for revolt and "quarrel". You did this once and it was excused as a mistake which you recognised and would try not to repeat. It is discouraging to see you start the same folly all over again as if you had understood and learned nothing.

You have not been asked to do any Yoga; you were too young and unripe for that. You have therefore no reason to complain of being asked to do something beyond your power. But, without doing any Yoga, it was quite possible for you, merely by your work and by daily contact with the Mother and her silent influence, to grow quietly and easily and happily in consciousness and character and capacity until you were ready. But if you refuse to learn self-control and discipline, (these are not matters of Yoga, but what everyone has to learn unless he wants to waste his life and bring his capacities to nothing), and if you cannot be content and happy with the much that is given you, you yourself will make your own life here impossible.

My second reason for not agreeing to your departure was that I did not believe that you really wanted to go or that what spoke of going was the true Y. But if your desire to go is serious and deliberate, if you cannot be happy here with us, then it would not be right for me to keep you against your will. That is a thing which I never do with anyone.

My third reason was that I could only sanction your going if I saw that you were too young or otherwise unfit to bear the pressure of the Asram atmosphere. I know that there is in you the capacity if you choose to exercise it. But a certain attitude towards this life and towards the Mother is needed which you seem unwilling to keep. If you cannot be satisfied, if you are constantly revolting and discontented and unhappy, if you again and again violently insist on going away, if you are constantly driven by something in you into these outbreaks which might have been excusable when you were a young child but are no longer proper to your age, it will be difficult for me to avoid coming to the conclusion that, as yet at least, you are not ready, not only for the Yoga, but even for living here.

One thing I wish to make clear. Neither myself nor the Mother wishes you to leave us. I do not approve or sanction your going, still less do I decide that you must go. But if your desire to go is real, insistent and imperative, if you cannot be happy here and feel that you would be happier elsewhere, then I shall be obliged to withdraw my refusal.

This is the situation. Try to get back to yourself, your real self, the real Y and see if he wants to go, if it is true that he cannot be satisfied by what the Mother gives him. It is upon that that the decision will rest.

3 September 1929

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At times I feel that Mother is not pleased with me. This feeling makes me very uncomfortable and I get the idea of going away from here. If she is not pleased, what is the use of my staying?

Mother is not displeased with your work or with you — there was no such thing in her mind. But the progress of no one here is complete — there is, as you know yourself, still much to change

and from time to time the Mother puts a pressure that it may be done. You must not take that pressure for displeasure. As for going away, you must yourself realise that the suggestion can only come from a hostile source and you should not allow it to dwell in you for a moment. Mother is quite ready to tell you in what points more progress is necessary, though I think you must for the most part know it yourself. Especially she wants you to be more guarded in your speech. You are in a special position and one of great trust and whatever you say is taken up and commented on, so you must be careful that nothing should go out from you which ought not to be said or known. To talk less and not be too unguarded in your speech should be part of your discipline of sadhana.

Keep yourself open to the Mother and in perfect union with her. Make yourself entirely plastic to her touch and let her mould you swiftly towards perfection.

9 March 1934

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It is certainly true that the Divine has no preferences or dislikes and is equal to all but that does not prevent there being a special relationship with each. This relation however does not depend on the more or less identification or union. The purer soul has an easier access to the Divine. The more developed nature has more lines on which to meet Him. The identification creates a spiritual oneness. But there are other personal relations which are created by other causes. It is too complex for all relations to be determined by one cause.

Yes, Yogis whose progress does not depend on the personal intervention of the Mother, need have no personal relation with her — only the spiritual contact in distance. Some may have a special relation, but that is due to special aspects of their sadhana. On the other hand one may have a personal relation with the Mother even though no progress has been made in the sadhana. There are all kinds of possibilities in this matter.

There is such a relation with all of those who have come here with a psychic sufficiently developed to admit of the relation. In other cases it is more a possibility than a thing realised.

There are roughly speaking three parts of the being in manifestation which come into play here — 1. the psychic being in evolution which brings with it its past experience of past lives and something of the old personalities, so much as it can make helpful for the present life; 2. the present formation due to this birth and made up of many complex factors; 3. the future being, which in our case means the great lines of higher consciousness above the present manifestation by joining which the transformation becomes more possible and the work attempted can be done.

It is the psychic being which brings in the contact through past lives or personalities, i.e. through something essential and still operative in them which it has kept.

But, in addition, some psychic beings have come here who are ready to join with great lines of consciousness above, represented often by beings of the higher planes, and are therefore specially fitted to join with the Mother intimately in the great work that has to be done. These have all a special relation with the Mother which adds to the past one.

As for the present formation, it may obviously have elements which, not being joined or met with the Mother, may feel themselves strange to her. It is such an element which many feel standing in the way; but it is an exterior formation and does not belong to the past or to the future evolution, at any rate in its present figure. It must either disappear or change.

10 June 1935

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Yesterday we discussed the Divine Love in relation to the sadhaks. My points were these:

1. It is said that the psychic being of each sadhak has a special relation to the Divine; this must mean that the psychic gets from the Divine the response that is proper to it. But does it mean that one sadhak gets more love and another sadhak gets less?

2. If the Divine loves one person more and another person less, this implies partiality on the Divine's part — but the Divine cannot be partial.

3. People say that the Mother loves those who are physically near her more than those who are not. I think this judgment is apt to be wrong.

I hope you will correct me where I am wrong in my understanding.

To launch into too many mental subtleties in this connection is not very helpful; for it is a subject which is beyond mental analysis and the constructions of the mind about it are apt to be either very partially true or else erroneous.

There is a universal Divine Love which is equal for all. There is also a psychic connection which is individual; it is the same essentially for all, but it admits of a special relation with each which is not the same for all but different in each case. This special relation stands apart in each case and has its own nature, it is, as is said, *sui generis*, of its own kind and cannot be compared, balanced or measured with other relations, for each of these again is *sui generis*. The question of less or more is therefore perfectly irrelevant here.

It is quite wrong to say that the Mother loves most those who are nearest to her in the physical. I have often said this but people do not wish to believe it, because they imagine that the Mother is a slave of the vital feelings like ordinary people and governed by vital likes and dislikes. "Those she likes she keeps near her, those she likes less she keeps less near, those she dislikes or does not care for she keeps at a distance", that is their childish reasoning. Many of those who feel the Mother's presence and love always with them hardly see her except once in six months or once in a year — apart from the Pranam and meditation. On the other hand one near her physically or seeing her often may not feel such a thing at all; he may complain of the absence of the Mother's help and love altogether or as compared to what she gives to others. If the childishly simple rule of three given above were true, such contrasts would not be possible.

Whether one feels the Mother's love or not depends on whether one is open to it or not, it does not depend on physical nearness. Openness means the removal of all that makes one

unconscious of the inner relation — nothing can make one more unconscious than the idea that it must be measured only by some outward manifestation instead of being felt within the being; it makes one blind or insensitive to the outward manifestations that are there. Whether one is physically far or near makes no difference; one can feel it, being physically far or seeing her little; one can fail to feel it when it is there, even if one is physically near or often in her physical presence.

11 June 1935

*

Sadhaks whom the Mother has accepted have some personal physical relation with her. I want to know if there is any personal relation with me.

There is a personal relation with most, but what is a personal physical relation?

Suppose a child wants to remain faithful to the Mother and tries to remain faithful, but he sees he is not getting any response. Is it not an illusion for him to try to remain faithful when the Mother never shows him her sweet side? Finally the sadhak will become unfaithful.

If the sadhak becomes unfaithful to the Mother, it means he did not want the sadhana or the Mother, but the satisfaction of his desires and his ego. That is not Yoga.

There are so many ways the Mother expresses herself physically to some, but it is to some only. Some she never gets tired of meeting for hours; with others she finishes in a few minutes. For example, she has spent a lot of time with X.

The Mother meets nobody for “hours” — if anybody stayed for hours she would get very tired.

Mother did not meet X more than others because she loved him more than others, but because she was trying to get something done through him for the work which, if done, would have been a great victory for all. But precisely because he took it in the wrong way, grasping at it as a “personal physical” relation

and satisfaction of his egoistic desire, he failed and had to go away.

25 June 1935

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You wrote once: "Those are the Mother's children and closest to her who are open to her, close to her in their inner being, one with her will—not those who come bodily nearest to her."² I do not deny the truth of this. But why then has the Mother taken a body and why are we in Pondicherry? One can have an inner relation anywhere; there is no need of coming here.

Mother has taken the body because a work of a physical nature (i.e. including a change in the physical world) had to be done. She has not come to establish a "physical relation" with people. Some have come with her to share in the work, others she has called, others have come seeking for the light. With each she has a personal relation or the possibility of a personal relation; but each is of its own kind and none can say that she must do equally the same thing with each person. No one can claim as a right that she must be physically near to him because she is physically near to others. Some have a close personal relation with her, yet she sees little of them—some have a less close personal relation, yet for one reason or another may see her much oftener or longer. To apply the silly mathematical rules of the physical mind here is absurd—your physical mind cannot understand what the Mother does; its values and standards and ideas are not hers. It is still worse to make your personal vital demand or desire the measure of what she ought to do. That way spiritual ruin lies. She acts in each case for different reasons suitable to that case.

² See letter of 25 December 1934 on page 496.—Ed.

Meeting the Mother

Right Attitude during Interviews with the Mother

The right attitude in approaching the Mother when she sees one, is to keep the being perfectly quiet and open to receive, without any activity of the mind or desire in the vital, with only the surrender and the psychic readiness to accept whatever is given.

Tomorrow, 24th, the Mother sees you — for meditation, so that she may see and do whatever is needed. 23 February 1932

*

It is a strange thing, but it seems to be absolutely clear that the Mother wants me to go to her. Everything in me says, "Yes, yes, it is true — there is no doubt about it." And I would surely go to her in spite of this fear that holds me so tight, if only I knew how and where to meet her.

This fear is an absurd and irrational feeling in the subconscious physical — there is no reason for its existence — unless it is the fear of the egoistic physical clinging to its own individuality and unwilling to be "swallowed up" in the Mother. Otherwise it can only be a sort of tamasic counterpart to the rajasic revolt and pride — for these two things often go together or alternate. Mother was and is quite ready to see you. But you must get rid of the fear, distrust and unwillingness, for there should be a trust and openness in you, when you come. If you wish she can fix a time — next Thursday at 9.30. In the meantime we can try to get this obstacle out of you. 21 April 1933

*

Is it true that having seen Mother, there may be a struggle for a few days? Should I be on guard against attack?

It is better to be on guard for the struggle is possible, though not inevitable. Something is put in you to develop — usually the

hostile forces try to interfere to prevent the inner evolution. A little more vigilance is therefore advisable. 9 May 1933

*

Four months ago I begged the Mother for an interview, but up to this time she has not accepted my prayer. I have decided to cut off all my vital connections with Bengal, but if two of my friends there meet with spiritual death, I will never recover. At this critical juncture of my life, will Mother give me an interview?

When one comes to the Mother, one must not come with these things in the mind—but in quietude and light solely to receive from her what one can assimilate. 10 April 1934

*

Mother, give me an immutable and constant peace.

The Mother is always ready to give you peace. It was for that Mother called you last time, but you were very restless. Sometimes you can receive very well. Try to be like that always,—always with the door of your being open to receive the Mother in you and her peace but shut against any other influence or pressure. Then you will have the immutable peace and feel the Mother always in you and yourself in her. 21 July 1934

*

I feel very dissatisfied with myself. I wish to see the Mother and arrive at something real.

You would arrive at nothing real by seeing the Mother when she herself does not think it the right thing. It is not by seeing the Mother that one gets realisation but by doing her will and allowing her true inner working within you.

Though I do not want the Mother to act under compulsion, I feel sure that if I give an ultimatum that I am going away, she will do all I ask.

You are mistaken. Mother will do what she considers to be the right thing for each. If it is right for you to go away or for anyone to go away she would not ask to stay. She does not think it right for you to go—so she would say No. But on the same ground she would say No to your vital desire. 28 September 1935

*

The Mother does not usually speak with those who come for an interview before starting. If she had to speak, she would not give an interview at all to most, for she would have no time. Moreover it is not by speech or instruction or answering questions that Mother works on the consciousness of the sadhaks, it is by a silent influence to which they have to learn to open themselves. As for his readiness for the Asram life, it should be evident to himself from his reactions, especially about his family, that he is not ready—he would have been pulled away by these feelings and it would have been a serious fall for him. To be told the truth about themselves and get the guidance unasked—that is a grace which sadhaks should accept with gladness—to weep and feel hurt is a reaction of the vital which he must get over. Psychic weeping, a weeping from the soul deep within, tears of the soul's yearning, of sorrow for the resistance of Nature, of joy or love or bhakti does not cause a fall, it can help and open up the inner soul from its veils; but this weeping has no strain or suffering in it, it is something very deep and quiet and brings a sense of purification and release. That is not so with the weeping which comes from the vital and is born of hurt or abhiman or disappointment or shakes or disturbs the nature.

16 March 1937

*

What attitude should I take during my meditation with the Mother? Last time I could not properly receive the Mother's Force or become conscious of her working.

To be conscious of the Force or working in a meditation with the Mother, the consciousness must be still and passive to her. If one is accustomed to be active and make one's own formations,

that stands in the way and must be suspended during the meditation.

I could not quite follow what the Mother said [*in the last interview*] about things in the exterior consciousness coming in disguise.

Mother only remembers to have said that there were many things in the exterior consciousness that obscured and veiled the inner being — this was in connection with what you said about the heart not opening. Perhaps she may have said that these things do not always show themselves in their own forms, so that one is not conscious of the obstacle.

17 July 1937

*

I intend to sweep out the lower forces before meeting the Mother tomorrow. Failing that, I do not wish to show my face to her.

That is the suggestion of the lower forces. They want to create an excuse for your remaining aloof like that.

*

The whole being feels a disturbance, a disgust, as if the sleeping lower nature has been woken up. My mind is full of bad thoughts and I feel burdened. I have become like a thing on the waves.

But why does this always happen after the Mother calls you? You must get rid of this reaction, otherwise the Mother will not feel free to call you. You must learn to use your will and not be passive to these reactions.

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If Mother's seeing you for a minute cured your vital, she would see you, but will it? does it really help you? Generally such desires in the vital are not stopped by satisfying them. All the same at the end of the morning when the others have gone, if you are there, Mother will see you for a minute.

Impossibility of Giving Interviews to Everyone

It is not possible for the Mother to give you the five minutes a day you ask for; her time is already too much taken. There are many others who have asked the same thing; the Mother has had to refuse them all. You are mistaken if you think that any such arrangement is necessary for your sadhana. A daily meditation of the kind would help you perhaps if you kept always the right attitude; but if you keep the right attitude, you will not need any such routine of outward means, the help the Mother is always giving you would be more than sufficient.

I think it needful at this stage of your sadhana to repeat my previous warning about not allowing any vital mixture. It is the crudity of the unregenerated vital that prevents the psychic from remaining always at the front. You have now seen clearly the two different consciousnesses,—according to what you have written in one of your letters,—the psychic and the vital. To get rid of the old vital nature is now one of the most pressing needs of your sadhana. You are trying to get rid of the vital attachments and to turn entirely to the Mother. At this juncture you must be careful not to allow the movements of the old vital nature to enter into your relations with the Mother. Take this matter of your wish for more physical nearness to her or contact with her. Take care not to allow this to gain on you or become a desire; for if you do, the vital will begin to play, to create demands and desires, to awake in you jealousy and envy of others and other undesirable movements, and that would push your psychic being into the background and spoil the whole truth of your sadhana. There are some who have suffered much trouble and difficulty in their Yoga by making this mistake, and I think it therefore better to put you on your guard.

13 July 1931

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I am so miserable and can't find my way, and what is most discouraging is that I see others receiving so much help from the Mother and being cared for by her, while I am left to myself with my wretched life to pull on somehow. For me the Mother's doors are closed. For others the freedom, enjoyment,

pleasure of her company, her constant love and help.

If you cherish this attitude and these feelings, how can you progress? they are the very opposite of the needed faith and surrender.

Who are these who have constant outward help from the Mother—you speak as if all but you had it? The Mother sees a small number of people every day because they come here for work in the rooms (*X, Y, Z*) or to report work to her (*A, B, C, D, E*). The Mother does not talk with these about Yoga, nor do they have meditations with her; they come for their work, speak about it and some general matters and go. There are some like *F* and *G* who get a meditation perhaps once a week, others come for a few minutes perhaps once a fortnight—there is no fixed period for any—or at long intervals, some see the Mother (apart from Pranam) once a year. For the constant outward help, the only way all these get it is by writing to the Mother or myself, just as you do.

If the Mother is not calling you, she has told you why; it is because each time you get upset; why should she call you only for you to be upset? She called you at your request a few days ago and now you are in this condition—worse than you have been for a long time—it has simply revived the old desire, repining, revolt. How is it that this happens if there is not desire, demand, wrong feeling mixed up with your physical approach to the Mother? or why else should there be this feeling about others?

I have been trying to make you develop the psychic attitude, bring out the psychic being, look towards the Mother not with the old vital demand, but with the soul's need, the psychic openness, confidence, so that when you approach her physically it may be with the true openness that receives the light, the strength, the joy she tries to give to everybody. That is what is demanded now of those who approach her; the old vital way is now discouraged not only for you, but for all. Develop the psychic attitude and there will be no difficulty for your approaching her or for her calling you when it is needful. You were beginning

to develop a capacity for feeling the influence. Instead of falling back to the old mood and the old way, continue to develop that. It is the only way and there is no other.

P. S. Do not allow any influences from people you mix with to upset you — I am speaking of any recent influence — e.g. from people who are dissatisfied and complaining that the Mother does not help them. It may be something of this kind has upset you without your noticing it.

31 August 1932

*

May I come to see the Mother on days when there is no pranam? I feel such peace when I pray at her feet and I long to see her on non-pranam days.

Do you think the other 120 people here have not the same wish — and what is the use of a non-pranam day if Mother has to see everyone who would like to come to her that day?

30 May 1933

*

Mother has a very limited time for seeing people — she has so much to do. So it is only when there is a strong necessity that she sees except for those who have work to do with her. 1933

*

What you propose about seeing the Mother at will is not physically practicable and wherever in a few cases it has been allowed in the past, the results have not been helpful. What you should do is to write every two days or so a few lines until the difficulty is over. You must especially let me know about the sleep and the nervous condition. In fact you ought to have let me know at once. Although correspondence was stopped and still is till farther notice, I had said that important or necessary communications could be sent.

3 March 1935

*

I feel a constant longing to ask the Mother to grant an interview to me. At times I feel utterly dissatisfied and uncertain of

what I am doing and a little meeting with Mother could put right the whole thing.

It is not because Mother does not care for you that she is not calling you — when she is sure that things are ready she will do it. But it is not possible immediately or soon. First, she does not want to bring up old difficulties — secondly, nowadays there are many difficulties and she is tired and does not feel like talking with people. You must wait till things are clear on all sides — they are not now.

20 March 1935

*

X gets 144 interviews with the Mother a year, Y and Co. get 48 or more, Z gets about 24, A and others get 365 or more! Most of the rest get 1 or 2 a year. Why not add one more interview for them? At present the Mother gives about 1200 interviews a year. If she gave 3 to each sadhak in a year, it would mean 450 a year, still leaving a grand surplus for the Xs, Ys and Zs. One more interview would keep the sadhaks in good spirits and they would feel happy for months. Now it is like the high pay of the higher officials in India. The Viceroy gets a huge amount, the clerks get hardly anything. How long will these inequalities in government remain?

It is not a government and an interview is not pay. If it comes to a question of demand and supply or of interviews as a right and privilege, no sadhak would be satisfied with 3 or with 300. There would be complaints, laments and revolts just as there are now. People would soon find some other ground for accusing the Mother of partiality and injustice (the people who get the most interviews are generally those who revolt the most, though there are exceptions). It is precisely this treating of the spiritual life as if it were a "government" or a court or a school (with places and marks and rewards and punishments) or a hostel or a mixture of all these and some other human institutions that has been the bane of this Asram. If it is to be a Government with Mother as President dealing out privileges, handshakes, pay, and what not on a principle of democratic equality or any other principle, then her only course would be to abdicate.

The number of interviews has nothing to do, by the way, with smallness or bigness of people, however the size may be reckoned. There are spiritually big people who get no interviews and spiritually small ones who get them. The same would turn out to be the fact on any principle of smallness or bigness.

The only place where a satisfactory equality of treatment is possible — satisfactory to the human mind and vital — would be I think Nirvana or the Nihil of Sunyavadins. 10 April 1935

*

I feel a vacancy in my life. If the Mother starts seeing me again for a short time, I will try to carry out some big scheme for her, such as calling a lot of people and doing something with them.

All that is quite premature. Big scale work can come only when there has been a great inner change in people and things also change.

Or if these big things are for the future, I can do some sadhana, and if the Mother begins seeing me, I can do it more consciously.

The sadhana must not depend on physically seeing the Mother. It is bound to go wrong if there is any such dependence. It is not without a reason that Mother has drawn back from seeing people. 14 June 1935

*

Yesterday I got into a condition of excitement and again I wished to ask the Mother to begin seeing me. There is a separation which makes me feel a sort of humiliation and a disappointment. It is not worth continuing this sort of life. Perhaps I should go away from here if it is not possible to see the Mother.

It is obviously a wrong movement. When you get excited like that and under the sway of a persistent desire, it is already

evident that it is a wrong movement — when it leads to a suggestion to go away if the desire is not conceded, then there can be no further doubt about it.

You ought to realise that the Mother knows better than you what is best for you and your sadhana. You must leave it to her to call you or not to call you. To let a desire like this seize you and insist on its satisfaction is not at all a right attitude. Especially this strong insistence of a desire to insist on the Mother physically seeing them is a dangerous thing for any sadhak and has done harm to many. It means that some vital demand has got hold of them which wants to satisfy itself and, if indulged, would remain dissatisfied and ask for more and more and revolt and make things impossible. The very fact that you talk of going home if Mother does not yield to your demand shows that it is such a demand that has awoken in you and is returning again and again — it is not a psychic aspiration, for the psychic aspiration always respects the judgment and will of the Mother. It is after long years of experience of the disastrous result of yielding to these vital demands that Mother has drawn back from them and now no longer sees many people whom she saw before. You must not expect her to go back upon her resolution so long as the vital of the sadhaks is not changed and clear of these demands and insistences. You should throw this demand away and go on quietly with your sadhana.

The first thing a Yogi should have is a constant inner peace and quiet and no excitement, no clamour of desires which he cannot control. You must arrive at that first. Moreover as I have told you, it is the inner reality of the Mother's presence and not only of her presence but of her control that must be now the aim of the sadhana. Any insistence on the outer thing is a departure from the true line and can only lead astray. In all these matters it is the Divine Will that must rule and the will of the Guru.

Respect always the will and decision of the Mother.

16 June 1935

If there is a possibility of the Mother calling me "when the time comes", my going away would be wrong and I can wait and see.

What I said was that you should leave it entirely to the Mother to call you or not to call you.

The Mother's will and decision I have always respected, but I saw no reasoning in the things concerning me.

I simply meant that her decision should be accepted whatever it is. Since it is her decision not to have a private interview, that will should be accepted and you should not go on insisting on her calling you.

17 June 1935

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But why does the Mother not see me? Do I lack the effort and persistence necessary? Am I not sufficiently sincere and constant? I will be glad if Sri Aurobindo answers me.

I have already answered often enough that you must not persist in these ideas — you must leave everything to the Mother.

These days I have an aspiration to be on the right path and do what is right and advance.

The right path is the path on which the Mother's will wants you to go, no other.

9 July 1935

*

Today too I am feeling that life is not worth living if the Mother will not see me. I used to be able to go to the rooms upstairs whenever I liked. Now I think that going away is the only thing to do.

No one is allowed freely inside the upstairs rooms except the few who work there; they can naturally come in within their working hours; but they do not take Mother's time — they do their work and go away. No one else can enter the upstairs rooms except the meditation room and the small one where she receives

people. There too those only can come who are called there and only for the time assigned to them, nor can they go about freely upstairs or do what they like. Everything is according to a strict obedience and discipline.

Mother did not stop seeing you merely because she had no time — though it is true that she has no time and is outworn and overstrained by excessive work, no rest and the sadhaks' undue pressure and claims upon her. She stopped seeing you because your vital became entirely uncontrolled. She saw besides that the push to see her was associated with vital desires, impulses, suggestions, confusions and wrong movements and she decided that so long as it was so, so long as you had not freedom and complete control over your vital she could not call you. Not only with you but with others she saw that her freedom in giving interviews was having disastrous effects — for they were feeding their wrong vital movements on it and throwing these occultly upon her in such a way as to give themselves and her infinite trouble and wear her out altogether. So she had to retire more and more and limit the interviews to a minimum, ceasing to see those who had this result from the interviews and admitting only those whom she could not stop altogether, but even they were reduced to a much smaller number of visits. This is the present state of things and it will continue till there is a true freedom and vital calm and purity in the Asram atmosphere.

You must be aware yourself that the vital confusions and disturbances continue in you though in a reduced form and that you have not yet freedom and a settled control over your vital. I had hoped that you would go on increasing the inner contact until you could get the constant inner nearness or presence, for when one has that then the vital becomes quiet and there is no longer the vital pressure and clamour for seeing the Mother; the psychic being rules and is content to leave all to the Mother, claiming nothing but what she permits, asking nothing that is not freely given by her will. Unfortunately the vital claim has risen again in you and this insistent demand. That it is wrong is shown by the very fact that you put before her this alternative, either that she shall see you or you will not stay here any longer.

There are others who have said that and Mother has always refused them. For she knows by experience that to yield to their demand solves nothing, — for their demands increase and grow more exacting and vehement, as it did with X, until finally they lose their balance and the end is the same, — departure.

If you did not yield to these vital suggestions and if you were content with increasing the inner contact and increasing self-control and peace, then in time you would have the fullness of the sadhana and would find life here well worth living. The push to go comes from an adverse Force that is trying to make people depart from the Asram — but none who have gone as yet have found peace or satisfaction outside. 24 July 1935

*

X gets to talk with the Mother for two hours a day — more time than we get in months! Yet when I ask for an interview with her for a few minutes, you write that Mother has taken down my name. And now she seems to have forgotten about it.

As usual when this Force seizes you, your statements against the Mother are unfounded. As regards your interview it was understood that you wanted to see her once before the 15th. Mother had fixed one day, but as you had a cold I suggested to her that you would not enjoy very much coming under such circumstances. After that her days were full, but she had not forgotten, for your name is there in her book put down for the 6th August. As regards X — X like Y is called by the Mother alone and for sadhana only once a year for a short time. They both come daily to her, not for sadhana, not for personal talk, but for work (sometimes also the explanation of a French sentence) and along with two or three others — not for 2 hours, but for one at the maximum, and that hour, even when it is an hour, is not taken up by him alone but by all those present in turn, each in turn giving his report and receiving his instructions. X might much more justly complain that he gets a word or a letter for his sadhana hardly once a year and a single word or a letter would be of much more value to him than a hundred talks about business — and that we were giving one thousand times

more help to Z [*the correspondent*] and others than is given to him. Luckily for us he does not complain nor the others either. But each is inclined to despise what he gets and demand what he thinks is denied to him and given to another. 2 August 1935

*

I wish at times to ask the Mother for some instructions for my sadhana.

Mental instructions are not of much use. The condition has to grow in peace and light and clarity till the higher consciousness can act continuously and perfectly. 12 September 1935

*

Could I have an interview with the Mother? Two or three difficulties have been troubling me since the beginning of my sadhana. I want to get a solution from the Mother's lips.

This method of asking questions and getting solutions in an interview is one of which the Mother does not approve. She finds it useless and it forces her to come down to meet a superficial mental consciousness which she has long left. 2 October 1935

*

The Mother did not say Yes [*to giving a personal interview*]. Nothing could be worse for you than your making your condition depend on your physically seeing the Mother whenever you wanted it. It would create altogether a wrong relation. It must depend on an inner nearness to the Mother, on your always being able to receive her force so as to throw away both desire and illness. That is the true basis of the union with the Mother. Otherwise, all the help you can receive you get at Pranam and the evening meditation. For the rest, for the Mother calling you for a personal interview, you must leave that to her. Her time is already filled up and she is overburdened with work day and night,—if she has to make farther time for everybody who wants to see her whenever they want it, things would become quite impossible.

Interviews with Outsiders

The Mother cannot see him; she is not seeing anyone from outside now. He can be told that he must first try to know something about Yoga before anything can be given him; he must know and be in a position to decide with knowledge whether Yoga is really the thing he wants. He can read the books and come back for darshan in February.

13 December 1931

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About these people outside, you must make it a rule not to give them hopes of Yoga or seeing the Mother — it will only raise expectations that have to be disappointed. Even if the Mother were seeing people from outside, what would be the earthly use of her seeing these old ladies on the way to heaven or these young girls on the way to marriage? All that is not serious. But even apart from that, Mother does not see people and she has no intention of changing her rule. So you must never say anything without previously asking — and in most cases it is useless even to ask. As for Pranam, Mother has stopped giving permissions — there are too many people already. As owing to these cases you will be meeting many people, you must resist all temptation and remain deaf to requests for interviews, Pranam or Yoga.

2 January 1936

Significance of Birthday Interviews

What is the meaning of the Mother seeing us on our birthdays?

About the birthdays. There is a rhythm (one among many) in the play of the world-forces which is connected with the sun and planets. That makes the birthday a day of possible renewal when the physical being is likely more plastic. It is for this reason that Mother sees people on their birthdays.

18 May 1934

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I don't see why people in general exalt their birthdays. Of

course, you wrote once that on birthdays the physical is more open and receptive to the Mother than on other days.

It is not a question of a physical birthday or of the body—it is taken as an occasion for opening a new year of life with a growing new birth within. That is the meaning in which the Mother takes the birthday.

7 October 1936

Right Use of Birthday Interviews

Why should you decide beforehand that your birthday is spoiled? You have only to throw off all these undesirable ideas and feelings which proceed from a still imperfectly purified part of the external being and take the right attitude which you should always have when you come to the Mother. There should be no idea of what others have or have not—your relation is between the Mother and yourself and has nothing to do with others. Nothing should exist for you but yourself and the Divine—yourself receiving, her forces flowing into you.

To secure that better, do not spend the time at your disposal in speech—especially if anything of the depression remains with you, it will waste the time in discussing things which cannot help the true consciousness to predominate. Concentrate, open yourself and let the Mother bring you back to the psychic condition by what she will pour into you in meditation and silence.

16 May 1933

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Mother, you asked me to write what I would like to ask for my birthday. Really I do not know. You know best. I would only pray that I may become utterly devoted to you and Sri Aurobindo in every part of my being, completely open to you, and that my faith may become perfect.

That is all right then. Mother will give what you want.

22 January 1934

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Since I saw Mother on my birthday I feel I am living a new

life in which there is a new intimacy with her. Is it true?
 If you feel so — but it can be no more than the seed of a new birth, for it has to be realised by a greater inner opening.

10 February 1934

*

It seems I have learnt a lot about myself yesterday, my birthday, when Mother gave me an interview. It was not a theoretical knowledge, but a kind of realisation or experienced knowledge and maybe a Force that she gave. I no more feel so weak or helpless or a slave to my defects and imperfections. Rather there is a growing surety that I shall be able to get rid of my whole lower nature.

It is what we call growing conscious — a perception of which the base is the psychic though it may take place in the mind or vital or physical. No doubt the Force that woke it up came from the Mother.

9 September 1937

Group Meditation with the Mother

May I ask the significance of what I very often feel in my meditation with the Mother in the morning? So long as Mother is meditating I have quite a good meditation, but as soon as Mother comes out of her meditation my own meditation becomes lighter and I can feel that she is no longer in meditation. I would like to know if it is a good sign for sadhana.

It shows at least that your contact with the Mother's consciousness is perfectly spontaneous and genuine. The Mother puts out her Force on all in the meditation and the intensity of your meditation shows that you receive it — as soon as she ceases, the dynamic pressure lightens and your meditation lightens with it. It is certainly a good sign, a good seed of the responsiveness that is necessary.

18 April 1933

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When useless thoughts interfere with my concentration, how am I to remember the Mother and lay them before her?

Aspire at the time — they will of themselves be open to the Mother.

26 June 1933

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When I become late to see the Mother in the evening, how am I to receive her Light which I would have received in her presence?

You can receive the Light at all times — even if less concretely than in the physical presence.

5 November 1933

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Since the evening the working of the Force has begun. Seeing the Mother in the evening, my consciousness opened itself before her more widely than ever.

Very good. The Force usually works in that way with interruptions and returns growing each time stronger and fuller.

4 August 1934

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During the twilight meditation with the Mother, my consciousness rose upwards in an utter passivity. From the neck upwards, the head was not in a normal state. What was this?

It means the whole mind was liberated for a while from imprisonment in the body sense and became free in the passivity of the wider Self.

16 August 1934

*

When I spoke of the inner mind of the Asram, I was only using a succinct expression for the “minds of the members of the Asram” and I was not thinking of the collective mind of the group. But the action of the Mother in the meditation is at once collective and individual. She is trying to bring down the right consciousness in the atmosphere of the Asram — for the action of the minds and vital of the sadhaks does create a general atmosphere. She has taken this meditation in the evening as a brief period in which all is concentrated in the sole force of the

descending Power. The sadhaks must feel that they are there only to concentrate, only to receive, only to be open to the Mother and nothing else matters.

November 1934

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About the meditation and the seat, the Mother gives this meditation *only* for bringing down the true light and consciousness into the sadhaks. She does not want it to be turned into a formality and she does not want any personal questions to arise there. It should be solely a meditation and concentration without personal or other desires or claims or ideas rising there and interfering with her object. That is why there can be no fixing of seats or other considerations having nothing to do with the sadhana.

2 November 1934

*

I did not come to the Meditation Hall for the evening meditation, but remained near X's room. At meditation time I fell into the same inwardness or sleepiness as in the Hall. Is it not possible to do so usually?

It is the pressure of the Force on the physical consciousness which produces that result of inwardness, though the translation of it into sleepiness can only be a transitory failing of the physical consciousness which is accustomed to associate inward-going with sleep. There is no reason why you should not do it usually if you find that suitable.

It seems as if at the time of meditation, the atmosphere of the Meditation Hall extends to all the Asram houses.

It is natural that it should be so as the Mother when she concentrates on the inner work is accustomed spontaneously to spread her consciousness over the whole Asram. So to anyone who is sensitive, it must be felt anywhere in the Asram, though perhaps more strongly in the nearer houses on an occasion like the evening meditation.

7 November 1934

*

When I try to meditate in the Mother's presence, my concentration breaks. There is a rush of thoughts, such as "what is the Mother bringing down?" and "what is the Mother's will?" Why does this happen?

It is simply a bad habit of the mind, a wrong activity. It is not in the least useful for the mind to ask or try to determine what the Mother wills or is bringing — that only interferes. It has simply to remain quiet and concentrated and leave the Power to act.

11 November 1934

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What Mother would like you to do is to come to the Meditation and Pranam putting aside all feelings of ego, anger, quarrel with others, demand for this or that, thinking only of your sadhana and making yourself quiet to receive from her the only things that are really precious and needful.

22 September 1936

*

Today during the meditation with the Mother, I felt that I could receive her help easily and naturally, without the least effort or strain. Does this mean that something in the being naturally becomes quiet by her physical presence?

It is not by the physical presence but by the Mother's concentration at the time of Meditation which brings the quiet to those who can receive it.

6 March 1937

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It is now clear that all along during meditation and pranam I have approached the Mother with a wrong consciousness. My approach was not passive, but always fully active — I pulled from above and below as intensely as I could. The result was that the centres were active, especially the eye-brow centre and the muladhara.

All that is in place in ordinary meditation, so long as there is not the complete silence of the mind and the automatic action in the silence. But the quiet mind is entirely necessary if you meditate with the Mother. Otherwise the mind goes on with its activities

on its own lines and cannot be conscious of or receptive to the Mother's movement.

18 July 1937

The Morning Pranam

No one should look upon the Pranam either as a formal routine or an obligatory ceremony or think himself under any compulsion to come there. The object of the Pranam is not that sadhaks should offer a formal or ritual daily homage to the Mother, but that the sadhaks may receive along with the Mother's blessings whatever spiritual help or influence they are in a condition to receive or assimilate. It is important to maintain a quiet and collected atmosphere for that purpose.

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The Mother wants you to say to X that if he feels any reluctance or any other contrary feeling in making Pranam, he must remember that there is no *obligation* to come — for him or anyone else. He must feel himself perfectly free not to come, if he does not want.

27 November 1931

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The Mother gives in both ways. Through the eyes it is to the psychic, through the hand to the material.

29 September 1932

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This morning I was late for Pranam. On my way there, I met X, who told me, "Why hurry? One can have pranam everywhere." I said, "Yes, but Mother is there." He said, "Mother is everywhere." I could not answer him, but what I feel is that there is a special Power in the hall where Mother is. When I am conscious, I feel something special and different near Mother. Also by her blessing I often feel an action of Power working on my head. So I don't think there is no difference if Mother is there or not.

You are quite right in that. Otherwise the Mother would not be here in a body.

X has a developed and advanced soul and he knows things which are impossible for me to understand. I often think I have no soul, or perhaps I have a soul but it is quite immature.

You have a soul and a beautiful one. Only it was covered up and not looking out through the instruments — now it is coming to the surface and all that will change. 18 September 1933

*

Does the Mother work from the overmind at the Pranam?

Not from the ordinary overmind, but from the Power above it. Naturally the overmind has to be used as a channel.

22 November 1933

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Shall we ever be able to understand the Mother's working at the Pranam? We feel only that something has been received. We do not know what she gave or how we received it or what is the inner meaning of her putting her hand on our head. We are not conscious of what she is giving us while gazing into our eyes. Are these mysteries to remain uninterpreted forever?

You have to develop the inner intuitive response first — i.e. to think and perceive less with the mind and more with the inner consciousness. Most people do everything with the mind and how can the mind know? The mind depends on the senses for its knowledge. 10 July 1936

Experiences during Pranam

Today I was meditating in the Pranam Hall. As soon as the Mother took her seat, I saw in vision a range of mountains from which white light was coming out. What is the meaning? From what plane does it come?

Mental. The mountain is the symbol of the ascent from the lower to the higher. The white light is the Mother's light, the light of

the Divine Consciousness descending from the heights.

7 August 1933

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Today, looking at the Mother at the Pranam, there was a good receptivity. She stood before me a while longer than usual, and I experienced her working. The whole of my head was filled with nothing but her light. Is this true? Did she really do that?

She does so every time, only today you not only received but were consciously receptive.

8 May 1934

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After today's Pranam I experienced an unimaginable depth in the heart and a great fire bursting out of it.

That is of course the psychic depth and the psychic fire.

5 May 1936

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Today when I was making pranam, I felt that this body must be crushed to pieces and laid at the Mother's feet. I also felt an emotion in my heart. What is the meaning of this emotion?

It was some feeling of aspiration in the vital. But the form is exaggerated. The body has not to be crushed to pieces but purified and made into a body in which the Divine can dwell.

Right Way to Make Pranam

If you wept this time and not on the other occasions, it was because you were more open — more ready for the psychic being to rise to the surface. The Mother has noticed in this respect a great progress in you and what you felt today was the sign of this opening.

1933

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Whatever connection I have with the Mother lasts only half a minute during the Pranam; whatever I have to give or take

happens during that time. The whole day's sadhana depends upon those thirty seconds.

Quite a wrong idea. The Mother's contact is there all the day and the night also. If one keeps the right contact with her inwardly all day, the Pranam will bear its right fruit, for you will be in the right condition to receive. To make the whole day depend upon the Pranam, the whole inner attitude depend on the most outer aspect of the outer contact is to turn the whole thing topsy-turvy. It is the fundamental mistake made by the physical mind and vital which is the cause of the whole trouble. 16 March 1935

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My psychic knows that whatever our condition — full of inertia, attacks and difficulties — all must disappear when one gets the Mother's touch at Pranam. Why then do so many say that they return from Pranam in the same bad state in which they came?

Naturally, when there is not the opening they will feel nothing, for the consciousness will not respond — the Force then works behind the veil to prepare things, but gives no immediate visible result. 6 April 1935

*

The Mother deals with each one in a different way, according to their need and their nature, not according to any fixed mental rule. It would be absurd for her to do the same thing with everybody as if all were machines which had to be touched and handled in the same way. It does not at all mean that she has more affection for one than for another or those she touches in a particular way are better sadhaks or less so. The sadhaks think in that way because they are full of ignorance and ego. Instead of thinking whether the Mother favours one more or the other less, comparing and watching what she does, they ought to be concerned at Pranam with only their own spiritual reception of her influence. Pranam is for that and not for these other things which have nothing to do with sadhana.

Jealousy and envy are things common to human nature, but

these are the very things that a sadhak ought to throw out of himself. Otherwise why is he a sadhak at all? He is supposed to be here for seeking the Divine—but in the seeking for the Divine, jealousy, envy, anger, etc. have no place. They are movements of the ego and can only create obstacles to the union with the Divine.

It is much better to remember that one is seeking for the Divine and make that the whole governing idea and aim of the life. It is that which pleases the Mother more than anything else; these jealousies and envies and competitions for her favour can only displease and distress her.

31 October 1935

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The reason of the difference in approaching the Mother is that formerly you came to her with your external being, external mind and vital and in your vital there were things it did not want the Mother to see or change or else it felt uncomfortable under the pressure of the Mother's force at pranam, because that was a pressure on it to change. But now you are approaching the Mother with your soul and that brings with it the true feeling and true relation it has always had with the Mother. Besides, your mind and vital—even the outer mind and vital—are now open and willing and glad to share in the true psychic feeling and relation.

The heaviness in the head due to the pressure is pleasant and not harmful because it is due to the higher force pressing down and bringing into the head something of the substance of the higher consciousness.

1 November 1935

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If there is an obstacle at pranam, it must be something wrong in the attitude—perhaps the old error of expecting some outward sign of love, approval or favour from the Mother. The pranam is not for that, but for receiving from her inwardly through the meditation and through the pranam itself. Nothing must be demanded—the consciousness must be surrendered and quiet to receive what she thinks best to give.

24 May 1936

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I think it is better for you not to come to the Mother just now, until you have found the true inner poise. At the present time it is far better for all not to come to her as a routine, but only when the being is open and ready to receive.

The Mother's Expression at Pranam

When one does something wrong, the Mother shows us at Pranam that she does not like it. Does she do this so that we will not make the same mistake again? When one does a right action and she gives herself fully at Pranam, does it not mean that she is happy with our right action? If she is not showing her liking or disliking at Pranam, then what is she showing us by her special expression?

She wants to show you nothing; it has nothing to do with the doings or misdoings of the sadhaks. Pranam is not intended for watching the Mother's expression or what she does with this one or that one or in what way she smiles or with how much of her hand she blesses — the sadhaks' preoccupation with these things is childish and for the most part full of mistaken inferences, imaginations, often curiosity, desire for gossip, criticism etc. Such a state of mind is a hindrance, not a help to sadhana. The proper attitude is one of self-dedication and simple and straightforward receptivity to what the Mother wishes to give, an undisturbed and undisturbing openness to her working in the being.

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Many of the sadhaks are in the habit of thinking Mother is displeased, not smiling at them, angry when it is quite otherwise. This usually happens when their own consciousness is not at peace or when they are thinking or conscious of faults or wrong movements or wrong acts that they may have done. The idea that the Mother is angry is an imagination; if there is anything not as usual, it is in the sadhak himself and not in the Mother.

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What came between the Mother and myself when our eyes met at Pranam? Up till the moment our eyes met, everything was all right. Then looking into them, there was this momentary repulsion and shrinking.

I suppose the shrinking and repulsion were in yourself? for there was none and could be none in the Mother. It must be some part in yourself (physical consciousness perhaps?) that is not in the Light and may not want to be.

31 January 1932

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All fear ought to be cast out. This movement of fear belongs to a still unchanged part of the vital which answers to the old ideas, feelings and reactions. Its only effect is to make you misinterpret the Mother's attitude or the intention in her words or looks or expression. If the Mother becomes serious or has an ironic smile, that does not in the least mean that she is angry or has withdrawn her affection; on the contrary, it is with those with whom she is most inwardly intimate that she feels most free to become like that—even to give them severe chidings. They in their turn understand her and do not get upset or afraid,—they only turn to look inside themselves and see what it is on which she is putting her pressure. That pressure they regard as a privilege and a sign of her grace. Fear stands in the way of this complete intimacy and confidence and creates only misunderstanding; you must cast it out altogether.

22 May 1932

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There is no chance of the Mother giving you the “look” you fear. On your side do not imagine one when it is not there—any number of people are still doing that.

The Mother's Smile at Pranam

After coming from Pranam I felt that Mother did not smile at me, and then there was a very slight feeling of resistance to her somewhere. Is this what you meant when you wrote about the hostiles throwing inertia into the physical mind?

At the time it so happened that the Mother gave you a smile of welcome and approval, but she felt someone saying, "He will not notice that you have smiled" — it was the hostile formation. This is how they work — by this kind of obscuration to blind the mind and senses first and on the basis of a wrong observation or failure of observation build up suggestions of a depressing or disturbing character. It happens to many sadhaks at pranam time to make this kind of mistake about the Mother's smile or expression and to worry themselves thinking she is displeased with them. This is a kind of deception against which one must be on one's guard and such suggestions must always be rejected.

12 February 1933

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You should certainly throw away the vital demand and the disturbance which it creates in your sadhana. Mother gives her smile to all and she does not withhold it from some and give it to others. When people think otherwise, it is because some vital disturbance, depression or demand or some movement of jealousy, envy or competition distorts their vision.

27 February 1933

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Some days after Pranam I feel intensely happy and a wave of serene calm and joy passes over me. On other days, though there is calmness, there is no intensity of joy. I think it has something to do with the Mother's smile.

Don't start having that idea. It is quite untrue and those who indulge it raise vital reactions and imaginations in themselves and provoke much unnecessary trouble.

If her smile is hearty and beaming, there is a proportionate reaction in me. But is that the true cause of my joy or does it depend on the inner state of my psychic being, of which I know nothing?

It is in yourself that there is the variation — not of the psychic

being which is always all right, but of the rest, mind, vital or body.

4 March 1933

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Your idea about Mother's mysterious smile is your own imagination — Mother says that she smiled with the utmost kindness and took the most helpful attitude possible towards you. I had written to you already that you must not put these erroneous imaginations between yourself and the Mother; for they push the help given away from you. These imaginations and their effect on you are suggested by the same vital forces that are disturbing you so that you may not get free from the disturbance.

My help and the Mother's help are there — you have only to keep yourself open to it to recover.

27 March 1933

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Today my lower vital rose up and disturbed me because the Mother did not smile at me. For years and years I have suffered so much from unquietness at the thought that Mother is displeased with me.

These things ought to be entirely rejected. When they rise they often twist the consciousness so much as to falsify sometimes the vision itself and always the feeling. The Mother has observed constantly that the people on whom she has smiled tell her she has been glowering and severe or that she has been displeased, when there was no displeasure in her and then on the strength of that they go wrong altogether.

10 April 1933

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Your mistake is to find a "censorious touch" in the smile where there is none. When the Mother extended her forgiveness — which meant there was something to forgive, her judgment was founded on your own letters. You seem to think that the Mother in some way condemned you and was partial to the others. Her view was that all were in the wrong and each had need of forgiveness — and each asked for and had it.

How is it that your mind still returns on these things instead

of going forward to the difficult spiritual change? The Mother had put them behind her, for a thing repented is a thing abolished. Be assured that there was no remembrance of them in her smile or her attitude towards you.

27 May 1933

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The Mother did not smile at me today at Pranam. Did she see something very untoward in me?

It is a mistake to think that the Mother's not smiling means either displeasure or disapproval of something wrong in the sadhak. It is very often merely a sign of absorption or inner concentration. On this occasion Mother was putting a question to your soul.

31 July 1933

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The physical being feels the need of the Mother's smile when it meets her look. Is it a kind of desire?

Yes. There has to be no disturbance when it does not come (knowing that its absence is not a sign of displeasure or anything of the kind) — then the Ananda of receiving it will be purer.

11 December 1933

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Yesterday when I did pranam, the Mother did not smile at me. Not seeing her smile, I spent the whole day miserably.

On that day Mother did not smile at anybody. It was not personal to you. A particular Power was acting in her which did not act in the ordinary way.

10 April 1934

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I felt at Pranam as if Mother withdrew her smile, but later I realised that she did smile — and even if she did not smile I received peace and became more inward at that time. Besides, after so many disturbances and wrongs on my part, I do not always deserve a smile. So either way I do not worry.

It is usually imagination or impression, at least that has been

seen in most cases. When the Mother does not smile, it is not from displeasure but in almost every case from some reason not connected with any action of the sadhak, but either from absorption or concentration on something that is being done. As you say, it does not matter — what is important is to receive what has to be received.

4 November 1934

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Why do I rejoice only when Mother smiles at me or gives me a special opportunity? I ought to rejoice in all situations. If after living so many years near you and her I still feel like this, I am not worthy of being here.

It is a very strange logic. Even among those who have made the most progress or been always the closest to the Mother, this or similar feelings still recur. It is not that they have not to be overcome, but to argue from their persistence that one is unfit to stay here is to make a large conclusion on a very small basis. This is again the kind of suggestion that comes in from the surrounding physical Ignorance. Things like these last so obstinately because they have become habits or recurrent feelings in the external physical being; they will disappear when the external being becomes filled with the Mother's light.

30 May 1935

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The Mother has been always specially careful in your case not to show displeasure or censure of any kind to you. To the others also she smiles always in the same way, for she knows the consequences to herself if she does not. But in spite of that, even when she smiles most kindly, they write to her that she has shown displeasure, withheld her smile, smiled in an ironical or blasting way, that they will commit suicide, go away etc. etc. The whole thing has become most intolerable and if the Pranam is to be nothing but an occasion for this kind of thing, it is better the Pranam should cease.

December 1936

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What sort of things can come under the category of “demand and desire”? What is the exact form of “demand and desire”?

There are no special sort of things — demand and desire can cover all things whatsoever — they are subjective, not objective and have no special form. Demand is when you claim something to get or possess, desire is a general term. If one expects that the Mother shall smile at him at the Pranam and feels wronged if one does not get it, that is a demand. If one wants it and grieves at not getting it, but without revolt or sense of an unjust deprivation that shows desire. If one feels joy at her smile, but remains calm in its absence knowing that all the Mother does is good, then there is no demand or desire.

13 September 1938

Smiles and Seriousness

Sometimes the Mother looks at us smilingly, as if she were pleased; at other times she looks in quite a different way, as if seriously.

Why not? The Mother cannot be serious, absorbed, drawn into herself? Or do you think it is only displeasure against the sadhaks that can make her so?

18 June 1934

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During some dark periods such as now, I am awfully afraid to go to Pranam, lest I should have the misfortune to see the Mother’s grave face, with no smile at all.

All this about the Mother’s smile and her gravity is simply a trick of the vital. Very often I notice people talk of the Mother’s being grave, stern, displeased, angry at Pranam when there has been nothing of the kind — they have attributed to her something created by their own vital imagination. Apart from that, the Mother’s smiling or not smiling has nothing to do with the sadhak’s merits or demerits, fitness or unfitness — it is not deliberately done as a reward or a punishment. The Mother smiles on all without regard to these things. When she does not smile, it is because she is either in trance, or absorbed, or concentrated

on something within the sadhak that needs her attention — something that has to be done for him or brought down or looked at. It does not mean that there is anything bad or wrong in him. I have told this a hundred times to any number of sadhaks — but in many the vital does not want to accept that because it would lose its main source of grievance, revolt, abhiman, desire to go away or give up the Yoga, things which are very precious to it. The very fact that it has these results and leads to nothing but these darknesses ought to be enough to show you that this imagination about Mother's not smiling as a sign of absence of her grace or love is a device and suggestion of the Adversary. You have to drive away these things and give some chance for the psychic with its deeper and truer love and surrender to come forward and take up the Adhar as its kingdom.

28 July 1934

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So many sadhaks are not able to understand the Mother's seriousness at Pranam. They find it difficult not to feel that they have displeased her in some way or other. Could you not clarify the cause of the seriousness?

The whole foundation of the difficulty is erroneous. It is the wrong idea that if Mother is serious it must be because of some personal displeasure against "me" — each sadhak who complains of being the "me". I have repeated a hundred times to complaints that it is not so, but nobody will give up this idea — it is too precious to the ego. The Mother's seriousness is due to some absorption in some work she is doing or, very often, to some strong attack of hostile forces in the atmosphere.

19 April 1935

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About Mother's seriousness at Pranam, you wrote: "The Mother's seriousness is due to some absorption in some work she is doing or, very often, to some strong attack of hostile forces in the atmosphere." But I never felt any hostile attack before going to Pranam; rather the attack comes afterwards when my vital fails to endure her seriousness.

It does not matter whether you feel any attack or not—the attack is there. In fact for the last several months the atmosphere is full of the most violent attacks threatening the very existence of the Yoga and the Asram and the sadhaks personally or the body of the Mother. If you are not touched that is a matter for which you ought to be grateful to the Mother instead of your vital getting upset because she is doing her work.

20 April 1935

Wrong Ideas about the Mother's Showing Displeasure

Why did the Mother have such a look of seriousness when I went to her? I have given up everything to take shelter in her, but sometimes I feel that she is displeased with me; then I wonder for whom I am living.

So long as you do not get rid of this silly illusion about the Mother's "seriousness", this kind of thing can always recur. I have told everyone the truth about it, that it is their own minds which wrongly think the Mother is serious and displeased with them. It is under the pressure of a Force of Falsehood that wants them to get upset and to destroy their peace and set them against the Mother that these things come. Yet you all go on still listening to the Force of Falsehood. It is only when you reject the falsehood that you will be free from these troubles.

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I have the idea that the Mother is completely displeased with me. Have I done something wrong or written something that has displeased her?

The idea is absolutely without foundation. It is the constant illusion that the sadhaks are getting that the Mother is displeased with them, that they have done something wrong or said or written something wrong and therefore she is severe or distant, that her expression or her action shows it etc. Very often they think this even when she smiles on them most kindly. It is a purely subjective feeling generated by some difficulty in themselves. The

Mother is not displeased with people because they have difficulties; it is only a reason for giving more of her help and support. All these ideas you speak of are suggestions generated by the adverse pressure on you. You can rely always on the Mother's Grace and you may be perfectly sure that we shall not throw you off—our support will be always with you. 4 July 1933

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Today at Pranam the Mother was not as usual with me. I got the idea of her displeasure and it disturbed me for a time.

There was certainly no such idea in Mother's mind. People have that idea because it is an old and rooted one in their minds and it is true that at one time it had some meaning when Mother was dealing with the vital difficulties of the sadhaks. But now it is different. At the present stage of descent into the physical the Mother is meeting all with a large equanimity, tolerating all the mistakes of the sadhaks and only bringing an inner pressure, supporting all with her force as much as they will allow her. This has been so for a considerable time past—but the physical mind of the sadhaks does not find it easy to accept the change and they seek for expressions and interpretations that are not there. This is farther complicated by the fact that now the Mother has little time to rest or sleep—and when it is like that she goes easily into trance at Pranam and when in trance she may in her body forget to smile or give the blessing etc. It is why I have had to warn people that they must not misinterpret these things.

19 November 1933

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Yesterday and this morning after Pranam the idea came that the Mother was displeased with me, she was treating me coldly and that she was throwing me off. I tried to reject it, but it came back again and again. Of course, there cannot be any truth in it, but it kept repeating itself in feelings, not so much in the thoughts.

Certainly, there is not and cannot be any truth in such suggestions. Neither displeasure nor coldness are possible and

throwing off is too absurd even to be considered. It is the attempt of the forces to set in vibration certain feelings habitual to the human vital—and it is a phenomenon that is constantly seen in the sadhana that when all substantial or even plausible reason is taken away from these vibrations, they are thrown upon the vital without any apparent cause or justifying reason by mere force of habitual response to some covert or subconscious stimulus. The one thing to do is to detach oneself at once or as soon as possible and see it for what it is and throw it off with decision.

26 December 1933

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This morning, as I watched the Mother come down the stairs before meditation, I thought that her face looked very displeased. Why? What have I done wrong? Can this be my imagination? Can one's eyes tell such lies?

Certainly they can and the mind can distort still farther. There are any number of people who have written to the Mother that she did not smile and was fierce and severe when she had been most kind and smiling to them, knowing that they were in trouble. There have been hundreds of cases in which people have heard the opposite of what she said and refused to believe otherwise until or unless others who had been present told them they were mistaken. Note that they did not believe the Mother's denial, but at once believed other sadhaks when they confirmed the Mother. We have singular disciples! As for the mind twisting and misinterpreting the Mother's looks, speech, action, that is so ordinary and everyday that it hardly needs mention, so if you are going to trust your mind and senses so absolutely, you will go on mistaking the Mother to the end of the chapter. It is only the psychic being that can know and understand her.

11 September 1935

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It is a great pity you allowed the thought that the Mother was severe with you to come in and throw you down. These thoughts are never true and whenever a sadhak indulges them, he is always

invaded by the old movements. The Mother's love and kindness have always been the same and will always remain the same to you, so you should never accept this idea that she is displeased or severe. But whatever the mistakes or the difficulties, our help will be with you and the Mother's force will work to bring you out and get you back the psychic openness and peace which you had for many days this time and which is bound to return and become permanent after a while.

19 November 1935

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I do not at all understand why you should think that the Mother was displeased with you for any reason whatever. She was just as she is always with you. Even if you had made any mistake, the Mother now is disposed to overlook mistakes and leave it to the pressure of the Light and the psychic being of the sadhak to set things right. But why on earth should she be displeased because you wanted to stop the French lessons with X or for any such trivial reason! Whether you continue or suspend your lessons is a detail which has to be settled in accordance with the condition of your mind and the needs of your sadhana and it can be settled either way. It is surprising that you should think Mother could show displeasure over so slight a matter. You must get over a nervousness of this kind and not disturb your good condition by imaginations — for it is an imagination, since it had no reality behind it. Have a more perfect confidence and do not let your mind create difficulties where there are none.

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Understand once for all that Mother is not using the Pranam to show her pleasure and displeasure; it is not meant for that purpose. The only circumstance under which Mother's attitude at Pranam is likely to be influenced by the actions of the sadhak is when there is some great betrayal or a violent breach of the main rules of spiritual life such as an act of sexual intercourse or when the sadhak has become pointedly hostile to the Mother and the Yoga. But then it is not a special show of displeasure at

Pranam, but a withdrawal of the gift of grace which is quite a different matter.

Wrong Ideas about the Mother's Smile and Touch

Sometimes when Mother smiles, people take it as an approval of their wrong activities. A sort of vanity comes in and says, "Oh, Mother is smiling. Don't worry; go on as you like." Or else there is a competition: "Oh, see how long Mother has put her hand on me." But if these constructions are wrong, why have they gained such currency? For on them people judge and criticise others.

It is a great mistake. We are persistently correcting it, but a legend has been formed and people cling to it. 5 July 1933

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I do not think your reasoning that you were in the physical consciousness and therefore the observation of the physical fact [*of the Mother's touch*] is likely to be correct is very sound. The physical consciousness is full of impressions and that they are not entirely reliable has begun to be more and more recognised — it is the reason why the statements of different people about the same physical fact differ widely. Especially when there is a depression or a pressure of adverse forces the impression given to the senses is often distorted or modified in the sense of the depression or of the suggestion made — of that we have had innumerable instances.

But apart from that it is a mistake to measure the power of the blessing by these details. I have known instances in which the Mother omitted to put her hand at all on the head of a sadhak and yet the force was felt double of what he or she usually received. That was because the Mother was very concentrated and putting a full force out. Even so a finger on the head with a strong power put out may mean much more than the full hand on the head with less in the touch. 21 August 1933

*

If the Mother's putting her hand or giving her smile at Pranam is all a mental construction, why do I get so terribly upset? I have to find some way to get out of it when it comes.

The obsession about the smile and touch has to be overcome and rejected because it has become an instrument of the contrary Forces to upset the sadhaks and hamper their progress. I have seen any number of cases in which the sadhak is going on well or even having high experiences and change of consciousness and suddenly this imagination comes across and all is confusion, revolt, sorrow, despair and the inner work is interrupted and endangered. In most cases this attack brings with it a sensory delusion so that even if the Mother smiles more than usual or gives the blessing with all her force, she is told, "You did not smile, you did not touch" or "you hardly touched". There have been any number of instances of that also—the Mother telling me, "I saw X disturbed or else a suggestion coming towards him and I gave him my kindest smile and blessing", and yet afterwards we get a letter affirming just the contrary, "You did not smile etc." And you are all ready to give the Mother the lie, because you felt, you saw and your senses cannot be deceived! As if a mind disturbed does not twist the sense observation also! as if it were not a common fact of psychology that one constantly gets an impression according to his mood or thought! Even if the smile or touch were less, it should not be the cause of such upheavals, if there is not an intention in it and there is no intention at all as we have constantly warned all of you. Of course the cause is that the sadhaks apply the movements of a vital human love to the Mother and the ordinary vital human love is full of contrary movements of distrust, misunderstanding, jealousy, anger, despair. But in Yoga this is most undesirable—for here trust in the Mother, faith in her divine Love is of great importance; anything that denies or disturbs it opens the door to obstacles and wrong reactions. It is not that there should be no love in the vital, but it must purify itself of these reactions and fix itself on the psychic being's trust and confident self-giving. Then there can be the full progress.

30 June 1935

Our ideas about the Mother's hand or smile at Pranam are not constant. If Mother puts the hand all right, then one finds her smile less. If both the hand and smile are all right, one finds he has been given a smaller lotus than others. If nothing else is found, then one remembers that in 1932 Mother did not treat me well. It must be the wolf in the lower vital at work.

Yes, it is the insatiable demand of the vital and when the vital is up reason gets no chance. It was the experience of this insatiable demand that made the Mother draw back and retire from the free outward self-giving she had begun. The more she gave, the more was demanded and the more dissatisfied people became and each was jealous of the others — life was becoming impossible and sadhana was certainly not profiting! 30 June 1935

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Today after the Pranam, even though the Mother did not smile or put her hand as usual, my consciousness remained high. The ego determines its revolt according to her smile and touch, but today it remained quiescent. I don't know how it happened.

The ego acts according to these things when it dominates; when it does not dominate or is not present, then these motives can have no effect. The whole question is whether ego leads or something else leads. If the higher consciousness leads, then even if the Mother does not smile or put her hand at all, there will be no egoistic reaction. Once the Mother did that with a sadhika, being herself in trance — the result was that the sadhika got a greater force and Ananda than she had ever got when the Mother put her hand fully. 11 November 1935

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All this idea about the Mother's looks and her hand in the blessing which is current in the Asram is perfectly irrational, false, even imbecile. I have a hundred times written to people that the whole thing is wrong and rests on a false suggestion of the adverse forces made in order to create a disturbance. The Mother does not refrain from smiling or vary her smile or her

manner of blessing in order to show displeasure or because of anything the sadhak has done. She does not, as certain people annoyingly believe, dose out her smiles or blessings in such a way as to assign a number of marks for each sadhak according to his good behaviour or bad behaviour. These variations are *not* intended to assign a competitive place to each sadhak, as to schoolboys in a class. All these ideas are absolutely absurd, trivial and unspiritual. The Asram is not a schoolboys' class nor is the Yoga a competitive examination. All this is the creation of the narrow physical mind and vital ego and desire. If the sadhaks want to get a true basis and make true progress, they must get these ideas out of their minds altogether. Yet they cling obstinately to it in spite of all I can write, so dear is this falsehood to their mind. You must get rid of it altogether. At the Pranam the Mother puts her force to help the sadhak — what he ought to do is to receive quietly and simply, not to spoil the occasion by these foolish ideas and by watching who gets more of her hand or smile and who gets less. All that must go.

8 December 1936

The Mother's Hand at Pranam

If the Mother does not put her hand on my head or keep it there for long, does it mean that I was not in a fit condition to receive well?

No, it means only that these days there are nearly 140 people and Mother has to do it quickly — otherwise Pranam would not end.

22 November 1932

*

I was not going to send this letter, thinking it will make Mother angry and that she will irritate me still more at Pranam by putting her hand only just a little, as yesterday. Anyway, it is now becoming impossible to live.

Why should you think that Mother will be angry? We have ourselves told you to write everything frankly and conceal nothing — so there is not the least likelihood that she will resent what you write. Moreover she knows perfectly well the difficulties of

the sadhana and of human nature and, if there is goodwill and a sincere aspiration such as you have, any stumblings or falterings of the moment will not make any difference in her attitude to the sadhak. The Mother thinks you must have had a wrong impression about her putting her hand just a little only — for she was just the same with you inwardly as always and there had been no reason why there should be any change. 17 April 1933

*

If the Mother does not put her hand on the head in Pranam, it does not mean that she is displeased — it may have quite other causes. People have this idea but they are quite mistaken. Some time ago the Mother failed to put her hand on the head of a sadhika at Pranam for two days. People mocked at her and looked down at her. As a matter of fact she was having remarkable realisations and getting more power from the Mother at Pranam than on ordinary days. The whole idea is an error.

2 August 1933

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I could not understand the Mother's intention in not blessing me with her hand when I made pranam.

There was no intention. It has happened with others but always when Mother was in trance or absorbed within. It does not in the least depend on the condition of the sadhak and has no meaning against him. 26 September 1933

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It seems someone has said that I take too long in doing pranam and Mother is a little annoyed. Is this true? In my ignorance I am unable to grasp her hints.

It is true that you take too long in the Pranam — Mother gave you several hints but you did not seem to understand. If it were not for the overlong time taken by the Pranam with so many people, Mother would not mind — but it is becoming impossible because people take so long in coming to make their pranam. It is better if you take only a short time. The power of the blessing

does not depend on the length of the pranam made.

22 October 1933

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It is entirely untrue that Mother was pushing you away today. There may be days when she is absorbed and therefore physically inattentive to what her hand is doing. But today she was specially attentive to you and at the Pranam she was putting force on you for peace, tranquillity and the removal of the difficulty. If she at all acted by the palm or anything else, it was for that she was acting. About this there can be no mistake, for she was specially conscious of her action and purpose today. What must have happened was that something must have felt the pressure and intervened and persuaded your physical mind by suggestion that it was *you* she was pushing away, not the difficulty. This is a very clear instance of how easy it is for the sadhaks to make a wrong inference and think that the Mother is doing the very opposite of what she is doing. Very often when she has concentrated most to help them by pressing out their difficulties, they have written to her, "You were very severe and displeased with me this morning." The only way to avoid these wrong reactions is to have full psychic confidence in the Mother, believing that all she does is for their good and out of the Divine Mother's care for them and not against them. Then nothing of this kind will happen. Those who do that, can get the full help of her concentration even if in her absorption she does not touch the head or smile. That is why I have constantly told the sadhaks not to put their own interpretations on the Mother's appearance or actions at the Pranam — because these interpretations may always be wrong and make an opening for an unfounded depression and an attack.

23 January 1934

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X complained to me that the Mother did not put her hand on her head at Pranam today.

Too much demand in people's minds so that the Mother seldom feels free to do what is best. Pranam and the rest have their

importance, but they ought not to feel upset or frustrated by the smallest change. Each ought to learn to have a sufficient inner life and inner connection to fall back on that whenever the outer is changed or interrupted.

14 June 1934

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What to write of my miserable condition? Today, when I expected the Mother to hold me up a little more, I got the reverse. But perhaps it is necessary to make a man suffer sometimes.

Mother put her hand just as usual. Not only so, but as she saw your condition needed special help, she tried to give it. But when you are in this condition, it is unfortunate that you are so much occupied with the feeling of misery as to feel nothing else, nothing that does not minister to or increase the misery. Support you always have; there is absolutely no reason why we should withhold it. If anyone is in serious trouble in this Asram, that falls on us and most on the Mother—so it is absurd to suppose that we should take pleasure in anyone suffering. Suffering, illness, vital storms (lusts, revolts, angers) are so many contradictions of what we are striving for and therefore obstacles to our work. To end them as soon as possible is the only will we can have, not to keep them in existence.

If you could only acquire the power to detach yourself somewhere in you when these storms come, not to be swept away by the push or the thoughts that rise! Then there would be something that could feel the support and be able to react against these forces.

28 June 1935

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It was not because of any fault of yours that the Mother gave only a short blessing; she has to do that for all who come at the beginning because they need to go quickly to their work. If you want a longer blessing, you must come afterwards. But, when you have to come early, you can get as much out of the Mother's short blessing, if you are quiet and open.

Feeling the Mother's Touch at Pranam

Is it possible to receive the Mother's influence at a distance, for instance at the time of Pranam? Sometimes when I did not come for the morning meditation I felt the atmosphere of the meditation hall wherever I was.

It is possible to receive, but not in the same way. There is an element, a touch on the physical consciousness that is wanting.

30 May 1933

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Today I saw with open eyes diamond white light descending on the sides of the Mother's ears; while doing pranam I felt a strange kind of touch and with it something entered inside me. When I returned home, I was still absorbed in pure bliss. What was it that descended into me?

There is always a touch coming from the Mother at pranam, one has to be conscious and open only to receive it.

14 November 1933

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During the morning Pranam, when X went for darshan and the Mother pressed her hand on his head, at the same time I felt her hand on my head as a concrete touch. How does this happen?

It shows that the subtle physical is growing conscious and felt the touch and blessings of the Mother which is always there.

20 March 1935

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Someone ignorant might ask how one can realise the value of pranam in the half-a-minute Mother has permitted to many. But one ought to know that inner things never depend on the time.

Obviously, the time has nothing to do with it. One hour's touch or a moment's touch — as much can be done by the one as by the other.

18 April 1935

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The Mother's inner or subtle touch, which I have sometimes felt, simply had not the same effect as her physical touch during the Pranam. The inner touch came and disappeared within a few seconds, leaving practically no effect, whilst the Pranam touch left its impress for a long time even when there was depression and resistance.

It is because you have lived in your outer and not in your inner being that it is like that. But unless you open to the inner touch, the inner being cannot develop. I mean by the inner being the inner mind, the inner vital, the inner physical, the inner psychic.

3 February 1937

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Could you explain what you mean by the inner touch?

The inner touch is the Mother's influence felt in the inner being.

When I was having experiences and realisations, why did I not feel the inner touch? It is said that without the inner touch, one cannot have such experiences, which are the fruit of the inner being's development.

You did not feel it because the inner being was not awake to it — it felt only the results — and these results were not experiences in the inner being itself but of the Self above. 6 February 1937

Flowers at Pranam

What does the Mother mean by giving us flowers at the Pranam?

Simply to put the power indicated upon you if you are willing to receive it. It is a progress suggested and offered.

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I felt hurt when the Mother stopped giving me flowers, but now I feel that I have not yet learned the first lesson of Yoga — to surrender to the Mother and accept that whatever she does for me is done for the best. Also, have I not myself told

her several times not to give me flowers. Once I got very disturbed when people asked me why Mother gave me such poor flowers. But now I have got on the right track again. You will change me completely so that all of me belongs to you and the Mother.

As regards what you say retrospectively about the giving of flowers, there were there two mistakes,

(1) The one you have yourself seen; you should accept what the Mother sees to be best and most helpful, not judging by your own standard, as it is she alone who has the right knowledge about those things.

(2) Never base yourself or your idea of the Mother and her actions on what others say—as when they told you you had wrong flowers. How can they judge or know? Their utterances may be the result of very wrong judgments and their statements may be misstatements.

Now that you have seen the right thing, go by the way I have indicated to you, the way of confidence and true self-giving.

May 1932

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The Mother was so kind as to give me a message in the form of six flowers. Their significances are: Devotion, Faith, Mental Sincerity, Resolution, Divine Help and Peace in the Vital. But I did not understand the exact meaning of the message. Will you kindly explain it?

The Divine Help was put inside the flower of faith—when that is done, the two flowers form a single idea = faith in Divine Help.

The meaning was simply that these are the conditions for the realisation in the Yoga—devotion, faith in Divine help, resolution, mental sincerity, peace in the vital—if these are there, the realisation will come.

10 February 1933

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What is the significance of the Mother's giving us flowers at Pranam?

It is meant to help the realisation of the thing the flower stands for.

28 April 1933

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When giving the Bhakti flower, it is the power of Bhakti, the possibility of it that Mother offers to you—if you can open yourself and receive it.

13 June 1933

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When the Mother gives us flowers, are we to aspire for the things they stand for or does she give these things with the flowers?

There is no fixed rule—sometimes it is the one, sometimes the other. But even when the thing is given, it is given in power—it has to be realised by the sadhak in consciousness and for that aspiration is necessary.

17 November 1933

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Today the Mother gave me a “Vital purity” flower, but my vital does not like this flower because it lowers the vital in the opinion of people. “Other people get flowers with good significances, I get only this kind of flower”—unable to repel this suggestion, my vital got roused and I suffered.

“Vital purity” is also a flower of good significance expressing a very high thing. When the Mother gives a flower like that, she gives the Force along with it. But you must receive the force, not think about people’s opinion of you or your prestige with them which is a thing not worth a thought.

22 November 1933

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Today the Mother gave me the flower Progress. I felt she was telling me that I am just sitting and I ought to move forward. What should I understand by it?

When the Mother gives a flower, she gives the power of the thing it means—if the sadhak is ready or willing to receive it, he can do so.

17 March 1934

*

X prophesies that I will get a "Divine Love" flower today; she wants half my share! I said I never get the nice white flowers she does. In any case we do not get what our mind thinks we should get.

Obviously not—the mind chooses according to likings or fancies or else to some mental idea of what should be; the Mother chooses by intuitive observation or else an inspiration of what is needed.

9 July 1934

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At Pranam I observed that Mother was giving smaller lotuses to outside sadhaks and big, full lotuses to those she loves more. To my fate came a medium lotus and from that time all was finished. I could neither work nor sit steadily.

Why on earth do you get these fits of comparison and measurement? They are quite foreign to Mother's thoughts or intention. She did not choose at all in giving to the sadhaks,—all were mixed together, whatever came to her hand she gave.

5 April 1935

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You say there was nothing intended in the giving of particular lotuses, but I find it hard to believe. First, Mother cannot be unconscious of what she is doing. Second, it would not create so much disturbance as to make me give up work and lose all strength, if there were not something behind it.

All these ideas are formations in your own mind and suggestions from a wrong force. It is the usual trick of certain forces to represent the Mother as a sort of malignant and insincere tyrant taking a pleasure in disturbing and torturing people and lying to them at every step. I wonder that a clear mind like yours should get so clouded as not to see the trick or fail to perceive that if she is like that she cannot be the Mother. But the singularity is that such ideas seem to spring up in almost everybody as soon as they get a little disturbed and they never seem to see the sheer illogicality of the thing. This has been a disease, it is true, that has sprung up and stuck in the Asram mind since almost the

beginning and if it is somewhat diminished in generality and force, is still there. When it disappears altogether, it will be a great day for the collective sadhana.

5 April 1935

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Are flowers mere symbols and nothing more? Can the flower symbolising silence, for example, help in the realisation of silence?

It is when Mother puts her force into the flower that it becomes more than a symbol. It then can become very effective, if there is receptivity in the one who receives.

19 July 1937

Avoiding Pranam

Is the idea of not coming to Pranam usually a hostile suggestion?

It is a hostile suggestion almost always.

How can the idea of not coming to Pranam be accepted, as some have done?

Various motives are played upon—pride, the desire not to be like others, not to be dependent on the Mother, the wish to protect some wrong movement from the Mother's control, the idea of doing the sadhana in one's own way free from the pressure of the Truth etc.

30 May 1933

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I felt a disinclination to come to Pranam, a dryness and lack of interest in anything, an absence of love for Mother. What is the use of going to Pranam in such a dry manner or simply for protection or peace or any such selfish object?

That is a suggestion which should be entirely rejected. It is the usual attack trying to act on the physical consciousness through dryness and depression.

24 February 1934

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I have often seen that X would be quite cheerful just before coming for Pranam, but when he came in front of Mother he looked sorrowful and displeased. What was the reason?

X is doing like many others — they are cheerful outside, but sorrowful or displeased or suffering when they come to the Mother or write to her. There is a sort of idea (which was long current in the Asram) and there is still a feeling in the vital that the more you do that with the Mother the more you will get out of her. Of course it is absurdly untrue — the truth is the opposite; the more one is cheerfully open to her and lives in the light and gladness, the more one is likely to receive.

Pranam and Non-Pranam Days

What are these stupid waves moving about the atmosphere? People say: "Non-pranam day means a day of rest for the sadhana."

It is the ordinary attitude of the physical consciousness — but once the fundamental consciousness is fixed, there is no reason why the sadhana should stop for a single day or need rest.

1 April 1935

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False suggestions have been telling me that I have no love for the Mother. But on every non-pranam day the sadhana refuses to move forward. How can this happen unless not only the inner being, but even the mind and the physical have a good deal of love for her? Only my love for the Mother is not outwardly expressed because it wants to take a psychic form, not a vital one. But as long as the outer mind and vital are not psychicised, it is not possible to have a psychic expression in the outer being all the time, but only for a few limited moments. Is this correct?

Yes, but the vital's test is very foolish. If the sadhana goes on whether you see the Mother or not, that would rather show that the psychic connection is permanently there and active always and does not depend on the physical contact. The vital seems to

think the sadhana ought to cease if you do not see the Mother, but that would only mean that the love and devotion need the stimulus of physical contact; the greatest test of love and devotion is on the contrary when it burns as strongly in long absence as in the presence. If your sadhana went on as well on non-pranam as on pranam days it would not prove that love and devotion are not there, but that they are so strong as to be self-existent in all circumstances.

8 June 1936

Fixed Places at Pranam

Are the places in the pranam hall fixed for each individual person? Today I was meditating there when suddenly X came and told me to move, saying it was his place. There was an empty place at my side, so I told him to sit there, but he refused and told me I was sitting in his fixed place. Then I moved over, but Y came and told me to move, for it was his fixed place. To avoid any disturbance I quickly left the place, but I must confess that I was annoyed and it disturbed my meditation. In fact X comes only once in a blue moon to the morning meditation, yet he wants his place to be reserved for ever.

Mother has not fixed places for anyone but the rule of the “fixed place” does obtain in the morning Pranam. It is Nolini who sees after these things. So you had better find a place in the sun not claimed or pegged out yet by any imperial Power and inform Nolini that you now claim that country.

23 July 1936

The Change from Pranam to Meditation

The present arrangement about the morning Meditation is for so long as the Mother has need of rest. It is not intended as a permanent arrangement. Only, if the sadhaks really want the Pranam to continue as before, they should make a better use of it. Many spend the time looking at what the Mother is doing, whom she smiles on, whom she pats or how she blesses people and gossip about it afterwards — most take it as a routine. All that is a wrong spirit and it puts a great strain on the Mother

who has to fight all the time against the wrong forces this wrong attitude brings into the atmosphere.

30 January 1937

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There is a conspiracy among the gods to take away Mother into retirement: no Pranam henceforth. Sir, they have taken you away already and now if Mother withdraws, well, we can do the same one by one.

Well, if people withdraw into themselves, they might find the Mother there!

1 February 1937

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Did your remark “people withdraw into themselves” carry a suggestion that Mother’s personal touch is not necessary or essential?

It is not essential — the inner touch is the essential thing. But it can be of immense help if properly received. For certain things it is essential but these certain things nobody yet is ready for.

Some people believe that the inner touch is not essential; whatever is necessary can be had through meditation or otherwise.

Whatever is necessary for the inner being, yes.

As a matter of fact, plenty of people are glad because now they can do whatever they please.

But there was never any necessity for such people coming to the Pranam! It is not obligatory.

I know from my own experience that we have abused the Pranam. To tell you frankly, when the morning meditation started I was glad, and I was not quite certain it was not better than Pranam, for I thought, “Now I am free from those worries about Mother’s looks.” Even then I believe that there is something great in the physical touch of the Mother, and one can’t afford to lose it under any circumstance; of course one must have the right attitude.

That is it. The Pranam (like the soup in the evening before) has been very badly misused. What is the Pranam for? That people might receive in the most direct and integral way — a way that includes the physical consciousness and makes it a channel — what the Mother could give them and they were ready for. Instead people sit as if at a court reception noting what the Mother does (and generally misobserving), making inferences, gossiping afterwards as to her attitude to this or that person, who is the more favoured, who is less favoured — as if the Mother were doling out her favour or disfavour or appreciations or disapprovals there, just as courtiers in a court might do. What an utterly unspiritual attitude. How can the Mother's work be truly done in such an atmosphere? How can there be the right reception? Naturally it reacts on the sadhak, creates any amount of misconception, wrong feelings etc. — creates an open door for the suggestions of the Adversary who delights in falsehood and administers plenty of it to the minds of the sadhaks. This apart from the fact that many throw all sorts of undesirable things on the Mother through the Pranam. The whole thing tends to become a routine, even where there are not these reactions. Some of course profit, those who can keep something of the right attitude. If there were the right attitude in all, well by this time things would have gone very far towards the spiritual goal.

What is the right attitude for real love and devotion? Is it to be psychically depressed because Mother is not coming for pranam any more or is it to try to get her within?

Psychic depression (a queer phrase — you mean vital, I suppose) can help no one. To try to receive within is always the true thing, whether through meditation or pranam. 2 February 1937

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Even though I feel Mother during the morning meditation, it is not the same thing as the Pranam was. I feel as though a fundamental support has been taken away — something one could hold on to is not there. I was thinking how nice it would be if the Mother gave Pranam in the evening, so that after the

struggle of the day we could turn a little more inward and have her soothing touch.

The difficulty is that apart from the slight incident to the eye that has happened, Mother badly needs a rest from the storm she has undergone physically so long and I don't think it would be wise to disregard the need any longer—for the storm has been there a long time. I hope that after a period of rest, things can be renewed but at present meditation is the only way, for there is no strain on her.

3 February 1937

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In regard to the proposed change which would vary Pranam with Meditation—not stop pranam altogether. It had nothing to do with the temporary rest taken by the Mother—that was absolutely indispensable. I had often asked her to take some rest before but she had refused because it might disturb the sadhaks too much—what happened made the break physically indispensable. The sadhaks ought to concede that much to her after she has laboured night and day for so many years without giving herself any real rest even at night. You yourself wrote asking her to take the rest she needed. Even so she did not fail to begin going down morning and evening and renewing interviews as soon as it was physically possible.

10 February 1937

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X feels the stopping of pranam so profoundly that he is depressed. But to make one's sadhana or life depend on the Mother's touch is to have a vital sadhana and a vital life, transient and superficial.

It is only if one can feel the inward touch of the Mother without the necessity of the physical contact that the true value of the latter can be really active. Otherwise there is a danger of its becoming like a mere artificial stimulant or a pulling of vital force from her for one's own benefit.

2 March 1937

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Some people seem to think that to prepare themselves for the inner touch of the Mother, they have to go through the preliminary stage of having her physical touch at Pranam. So the question is: Is it possible for all, at the very beginning, to develop the inner touch without the physical touch?

If they are so dependent on the physical touch that they cannot feel anything when it is not there, this means that they have not used it at all for developing the inner connection; if they had, the inner connection after so many years would already be there. The inner connection can only be developed by an inner concentration and aspiration, not by a mere outward pranam every day. What most people do is simply to pull vital force from the Mother and live on it—but that is not the object of the Pranam.

4 March 1937

*

Pulling is a psychological act—people are always pulling vital force from each other though they do not do it consciously, i.e. with a purpose in the mind—it is instinctive in the vital to draw force from wherever it can. All contact is in fact a receiving and giving of vital forces in a small or great degree. You have yourself said that after meeting such and such person you felt empty and exhausted—that means the person drew your vital force out of you. That is what people do at pranam, instead of being quiet and receptive, they pull vitally. It can be stopped by cutting off connection, but if the Mother did that at pranam, then the pranam would be useless.

5 March 1937

*

For many people the present morning meditation with the Mother has had a good result. They are able to receive better than when there was only pranam. But in my case the withdrawal of pranam has meant a reduction of psychological pressure by 84 percent.

Different people react differently to the change. Pranam had become to many a routine, to many a mere occasion of pulling the Mother's vital forces away from her so as to supply themselves

with vital provender for the day, to many a mere occasion for gossip as to how the Mother had behaved with this one or that one (all founded on their own "observation", imagination and inference); the attitude to it had become twisted. If there had been the right attitude in all and the right use of the contact, it would have been a different matter.

25 March 1937

*

Mother has told you what to reply to X about other points. You may add this from me, that all this about Mother's smile and displeasure is simply the wrong play of the vital in her. It is because so many of the sadhaks were indulging in this wrong play of the vital about Mother's smile and her pleasure and displeasure and all kinds of revolts and jealousies and anger against the Mother and canvassing despondency and talk of going away etc. that the Pranam had to be stopped. Nothing can be worse for the sadhana than to give play to ignorant vital movements like these. She must throw these things away from her if she wants to make any progress in sadhana.

22 April 1937

Outsiders at Pranam

The permission for Pranam and meditation cannot be given. In between the Darshans it will now be no longer allowed to people from outside or only in exceptional cases.

14 December 1935

*

Why on earth can't people wait for outsiders to ask for Pranam instead of goading them to come to it? It makes the Pranam cheap and makes people think we are yearning for them to come and make Pranam, which is a damned mistake and not conducive to the dignity of the spiritual life.

25 September 1938

Making Pranam at a Distance

I am trying to sit in concentration [*in Bombay*], but I am unable to do anything except offering pranams to the Mother.

Am I proceeding correctly?

Write to him that what he is doing is quite right. While making the Pranam he should aspire to be open to the Mother's influence and her workings in him and to become conscious of her workings.

29 August 1930

Making Pranam to Others

Why is there this imagination? X is as human as she can be and not in the least superhuman. Nobody is to be bowed down to except myself and the Mother. Be on your guard against allowing these or other imaginations to take hold of you — they come easily when the mind is exalted and should be looked at carefully, not accepted without discernment.

22 November 1932

*

It [*the wish to make pranam to others*] is a wrong suggestion from somewhere. It is very necessary not to take the attitude of Pranam to others or to give even in thought a place at all approaching or similar to the Mother's.

27 July 1934

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In a dream it was Pranam time. There was a boyish looking person to whom all had to do pranam by the Mother's order. Someone made pranam to him and I noted that the boyish person spoke some words in anger. I hesitated, but since Mother had told us to do it, I had to do pranam and so did all the others. Why these wrong pranams and Mother's order?

It was evidently a vital formation, as Mother's order could not possibly be for the pranam to be to another, since such a thing is forbidden and would be disastrous.

It is the kind of formation X was persistently making that all must approach and realise the Truth through him and he even hoped that one day we would realise the fact that the supramental Truth had descended into him and into him alone and would order all to approach it and us only through him! You

probably saw in your dream something like that moving about and the dream gave it form. Several people had this delusion before, but I think with X it went out of the Asram. Still some remnants may be floating still.

9 September 1934

Pranam in the Reception Hall

It seems X has often criticised Y for sitting and doing pranam and meditation in the Reception Hall near the photographs. I do not understand this propaganda of X — does the Mother want him to do that?

It is X's own idea. The only thing Mother insisted on is that the Reception Hall is primarily meant for visitors and at the time when visitors come sadhaks should not occupy the place or do meditation or pranam there. There has never been any restriction on meditation or pranam before our photographs as such — external worship was never forbidden. It is only a question of the place being kept mainly for its original purpose. Z had at one time almost occupied the place keeping some kind of mattress or something there and meditating for long periods — that was objected to certainly. Idolatry comes in only when the image pushes out the Person — there were one or two who said that for them that (the photograph there) was the Mother (more even than the living Person). There was a growing atmosphere of excess about all this and the Mother had to recall people to a sense of measure. That is all. But there is no prohibition of it on principle.

15 March 1935

The Soup Ceremony

I saw in dream: The Mother is giving me soup. I am taking the soup from the Mother's hand and bowing down at her feet. What is the reason for this dream? What is the spiritual meaning of the soup which the Mother used to give us?

The soup was instituted in order to establish a means by which the sadhak might receive something from the Mother by an interchange in the material consciousness. Owing to the past

association probably you see like that when your material consciousness in dream receives something from the Mother.

27 July 1933

The Value of Darshan

The Mother is within but the darshan of her helps to realise the Divine on the physical plane also.

11 May 1933

*

I would like to know if it is harmful to talk while waiting for the Mother to come out? I sometimes cannot help talking, laughing and joking.

If you attach any value to the darshan, it is better to be *recueilli*. If her coming is only one incident of the day's routine like taking dinner, then of course it does not matter.

24 July 1933

*

Is there any difference between *recueilli* and concentrated?

Recueilli means drawn back, quiet and collected in oneself.

25 July 1933

*

The best way for Darshan is to keep oneself very collected and quiet and open to receive whatever the Mother gives.

12 February 1937

Public Darshan Days

Mother, Lord, on the 24th I shall take my food only after having your darshan. Mother, Lord, destroy all my wrong thoughts and feelings.

That is quite wrong. Fasting will not in the least remove any bad things — it is by receiving the Mother's Light and Force in you that they will go. You must eat tomorrow.

23 November 1933

*

I wonder if it is pleasant on Darshan days for the Mother to be touched by 300 people with various things in their vitals and physicals. Perhaps above the Overmind one feels all as the Divine, so the touch and all else is taken delight in as a play of the Divine behind all. Yet her body must be feeling a little uneasy at these touches.

Not uneasy; but it is not easy to absorb and deal with all that when the number is so many and so much is foreign matter.

1 September 1934

*

X is hopeful that the Mother will see Y before they leave Pondicherry. If bringing her for Darshan is not possible, could Mother see her at some other time?

Mother cannot see her. The most we can concede is that she may be brought for Darshan in the way proposed, but she must simply take the blessing and pass, there must be no lingering. It is a mistake to bring sick people or the insane to the Darshan for cure — the Darshan is not meant for that. If anything is to be done or can be done for them, it can be done at a distance. The Force that acts at the time of Darshan is of another kind and one deranged or feeble in mind cannot receive or cannot assimilate it — it may produce a contrary effect owing to this incapacity if received at all. If the Force is withheld, then Darshan is useless, if received by such people it is unsafe. It is similar reasons which dictate the rule forbidding children of tender years to be brought to the Darshan.

13 August 1937

The First Blessing

No — we don't put our picture inside anybody when we give the first blessing. But if you go on looking inside, you will one day find the Mother there.

Aspects of the Mother's Life in the Ashram

The Mother's Music

It is not by knowledge of music that the understanding [*of the Mother's music*] comes; nor is it by effort of the mind—it is by becoming inwardly silent, opening within and getting the spontaneous feeling of what is in the music.

1932

*

I feel within me a tendency for music, but I understand nothing of harmony, tune and rhythm. Yet sometimes when I hear the Mother's music, I am spellbound and lose all sense of time.

It is not necessary to have technical knowledge in order to feel what is behind the music. Mother of course does not play for the sake of a technical musical effect, but to bring down something from the higher planes and that anyone can receive who is open.

16 September 1933

*

When I entered the Mother's room, she had just finished playing for a long time—that is why I did not expect her to play for me.

The Mother has played music from her childhood upwards—so it is no trouble to her to sing or play several times.

16 September 1933

*

Why does my mind become so full of joy listening to the Mother's music? Today while listening to her play, my mind, my heart, my whole consciousness became full of peace and joy and then went high up somewhere.

What else is the Mother's music except the bringing down of these things? She does not play or sing merely for the music's

sake, but to call down the Divine Consciousness and its Powers.

16 September 1933

*

Yesterday when the Mother was playing her music, I was much struck by the descent of forces in me. I clearly experienced these three elements: aspiration, surrender and the receiving of blessings. First, her soul as the immanent Divine aspired to the transcendent Divine; it was a call for her transcendent Self to come down and take possession of the downtrodden natures of her children. Then the surrender: in her zeal for union with her highest Divine Self, she almost loses herself. Then from the highest, her Voice comes down for the benefit of her children. She receives the blessings from above and showers them upon all her children. I do not know how far I am right.

I think it is fairly correct. At any rate the first and second parts are quite correct. I do not remember the third in this form but it was a firm assurance of the realisation. 27 September 1933

*

Is it true that when the Mother plays on the organ she calls down the Gods of the higher planes to help us?

Not consciously.

9 February 1934

*

You wrote in reply to my letter of yesterday: "Not consciously." Does it mean that the Gods are attracted to the Mother's music and so come down to hear it?

They may be.

10 February 1934

*

When the Mother plays the organ, something new enters into my consciousness. Does she really bring down something while playing?

If she did not bring something, why should she play at all?

19 April 1934

*

Yesterday I heard the Mother playing Indian music and a few days ago she was corresponding with X about Indian music.

The Mother's music has often been recognised by Y as Indian music of this or that raga. The Mother plays whatever comes through her — she does not usually play any previously composed music whether European or Indian — the latter in fact she has never learned.

11 September 1934

*

Some people think that in the Overmind and Supermind there will be no need of prayer or aspiration. They must have forgotten that even our Mother has aspirèd constantly, day and night, or that when she plays her music we feel that she is praying.

Yes. All that is very true. It is a prayer or an invocation that Mother makes in the music.

1 June 1935

The Mother's Attitude towards Music and Other Arts

Why should you think the Mother does not approve of expression,— provided it is the right expression of the right thing,— or suppose that silence and true expression are contradictory? The truest expression comes out of an absolute inner silence. The spiritual silence is not a mere emptiness; nor is it indispensable to abstain from all activity in order to find it.

26 April 1931

*

For the moment I am answering only to your question about the music. Let me say at once that all of you seem to have too great an aptitude for making drastic conclusions on the strength of very minor facts. It is always perilous to take two or three small facts, put them together and build upon them a big inference. It

becomes still more dangerous when you emphasise minor facts and set aside or belittle the meaning of the main ones. In this case the main facts are (1) that the Mother has loved music all her life and found it a key to spiritual experience, (2) that she has given all encouragement to your music in special and to the music of others also. She has also made clear the relation of Art and Beauty with Yoga. It is therefore rather extraordinary that anyone should think she only tolerates music here and considers it inconsistent with Yoga. It is perfectly true that Music or Art are not either the first or the only thing in life for her,—any more than Poetry or Literature are with me,—the Divine, the divine consciousness, the discovery of the conditions for a divine life are and must be our one concern, with Art, Poetry or Music as parts or means only of the divine life or expression of the Divine Truth and the Divine Beauty. That does not mean that they are only “tolerated”, but that they are put in their right place.

29 October 1932

*

At the music one or two words of X's song practically made me weep with rapture, and some of Y's soft and deep turns of phrase almost led to tears. Afterwards it was silence. Is it the Mahalakshmi aspect of the Mother that is working these days?

On the music days it is always the Mahalakshmi aspect that is prominent.

25 December 1933

*

What can be stranger than this idea of yours that Mother likes only European music and does not like or appreciate Indian music—that she only pretends to do it or that she tolerates it so as not to discourage people! Remember that it is the Mother who has always praised and supported your music and put her force behind you so that your music might develop into spiritual perfection and beauty. In your poetry it was I that supported you most, in detail; the Mother could only do it with a general force, because she could not read the original (though she found them

in translations very beautiful), but that in music it has been just the other way round. You surely are not going to say that all that was unfelt? And the development of X? That too was Indian music, not European. And then when I write to you in praise of your music, do you think it is only my opinion that I am transmitting? Most often it is her words that I use to express our common feeling.

26 December 1933

*

There have been instances where people have taken up music with your approval, and they have worked at it only to find out later that it was not their line. What a waste of time for nothing! This is the thought that curbs my enthusiasm for writing poetry. Otherwise I quite understand that one has to suffer the "pangs of delivery". What do you say?

Approval or permission? People get it into their heads that they would like to do some music, because it is the fashion or because they like it so much, and the Mother may tolerate it or say, "All right, try." That does not mean they are predestined or doomed to be musicians — or poets — or painters according to the case. Perhaps one of them who try may bloom, others drop off. X starts painting and shows only a fanciful dash at first, after a time he brings out work, remarkable work. Y does clever facile things; one day he begins to deepen and a possible painter in the making outlines. Others, — well, they don't. But they can try — they will learn something about painting at least.

Labour at your sestets if the spirit pushes you. The Angel of Poetry may be delivered out of the labour, even if with a forceps.

24 May 1935

*

You have spoken of your singing. You know well that we approve of it and I have constantly stressed its necessity for you as well as that of your poetry. But the Mother absolutely forbade X's singing. To music for some again she is indifferent or discourages it, for others she approves as for Y, Z and others. For some time she encouraged the concerts, afterwards she stopped them.

You drew from the prohibition to X and the stopping of the concerts that Mother did not like music or did not like Indian music or considered music bad for sadhana and all sorts of strange mental reasons like that. Mother prohibited X because while music was good for you, it was spiritually poison to X —the moment he began to think of it and of audiences, all the vulgarity and unspirituality in his nature rose to the surface. You can see what he is doing with it now! So again with the concerts —though in a different way—she stopped them because she had seen that wrong forces were coming into their atmosphere which had nothing to do with the music in itself; her motives were not mental. It was for similar reasons that she drew back from big public displays like Udayshankar's. On the other hand she favoured and herself planned the exhibition of paintings at the Town Hall. She was not eager for you to have your big audiences for your singing because she found the atmosphere full of mixed forces and found too you had afterwards usually a depression; but she has always approved of your music in itself done privately or before a small audience. If you consider then, you will see that here there is no mental rule, but in each case the guidance is determined by spiritual reasons which are of a flexible character and look only at what in each case are the spiritual conditions, benefits, possibilities. There is no other consideration, no rule. Music, painting, poetry and many other activities which are of the mind and vital can be used as part of spiritual development or of the work and for a spiritual purpose —“it depends on the spirit in which they are done”.

24 October 1936

Golconde¹

The institution of visitors' cards was not made for love of discipline or rule-making, but out of practical necessity. People from the town were coming in pretending to be visitors and taking their meals in the dining room and unpermitted visitors were

¹ A large Ashram residence and guesthouse built in the late 1930s.—Ed.

passing themselves in for the Darshan; it was not possible for the dining room workers or the gatekeepers to know all the visitors or who were or were not genuine. I don't see myself why anybody should object or resent this necessary precaution. The alternative would be to let everybody who wanted enter for the Darshan and to let anybody who wanted to take his meal in the dining room. That would soon make things impossible.

As for X's handbag that is part of the special rules for Golconde. These rules, which do not obtain for the rest of the Asram houses, are read out to everybody who is to stay in Golconde and if he does not want he can be given accommodation elsewhere. X seemed to be very happy about his stay here; if he was not really so and felt badly about these rules, why on earth did he refuse to stay in your place?

I may mention that he told Y that there were two things he specially admired in the Asram, first the fact that everybody here rich or poor or of whatever caste was on the same level, and secondly the discipline of the Asram. He said, according to Y, that the absence of discipline was the great bane in India, neither individuals nor groups had any discipline. Then why did he weep merely because he was not allowed to put his handbag in a place not intended for it? I do not agree myself with him in the idea that there is perfect discipline in the Asram; on the contrary, there is a great lack of it, much indiscipline, quarrelling and self-assertion. What there is, is organisation and order which the Mother has been able to establish and maintain in spite of all that. That organisation and order is necessary for all collective work; it has been an object of admiration and surprise for all from outside who have observed the Asram; it is the reason why the Asram has been able to survive and outlive the malignant attacks of the Catholic priests and of many people in Pondicherry who would otherwise have got it dissolved long ago. The Mother knew very well what she was doing and what was necessary for the work she had to do.

Discipline itself is not something especially Western; in Oriental countries like Japan, China and India it was at one time all-regulating and supported by severe sanctions in a way that

Westerners would not tolerate. Socially whatever objections we may make to it, it is a fact that it preserved Hindu religion and Hindu society through the ages and through all vicissitudes. In the political field there was on the contrary indiscipline, individualism and strife; that is one reason why India collapsed and entered into servitude. Organisation and order were attempted but failed to endure. Even in the spiritual life India has had not only the free wandering ascetic, a law to himself, but has felt impelled to create orders of Sannyasins with their rules and governing bodies and there have also been monastic institutions with a strict discipline. Since no work can be done successfully without these things — even the individual worker, the artist for instance, has to go through a severe discipline in order to become efficient — why should the Mother be held to blame if she insists on discipline in the exceedingly difficult work she has had put in her charge?

I don't see on what ground you expect order and organisation to be carried on without rules and without discipline. You seem to say that people should be allowed complete freedom with only such discipline as they choose to impose upon themselves; that might do if the only thing to be done were for each individual to get some inner realisation and life did not matter or if there were no collective life or work or none that had any importance. But this is not the case here. We have undertaken a work which includes life and action and the physical world. In what I am trying to do, the spiritual realisation is the first necessity, but it cannot be complete without an outer realisation also in life, in man, in this world. Spiritual consciousness within but also spiritual life without. The Asram as it is now is not that ideal, for that all its members would have to live in a spiritual consciousness and not in the ordinary egoistic mind and mainly rajasic vital nature. But all the same, the Asram is a first form which our effort has taken, a field in which the preparatory work has to be done. The Mother has to maintain it and for that all this order and organisation has to be there and it cannot be done without rules and discipline. Discipline is even necessary for the overcoming of the ego and the mental preferences and

the rajasic vital nature, as a help to it at any rate. If these were overcome outward rules etc. would be less necessary; spontaneous agreement, unity, harmony and spontaneous right action might take its place. But while the present state of things exists, with the abandonment or leaving out of discipline except such as people might choose or not choose to impose upon themselves, the result would be failure and disaster. One has only to think what would have been the result if there had been no rules and no discipline prohibiting sex-indulgence; even with them things have not been so very good. On that principle the work also would have gone to pot, there would have been nothing but strife, assertion by each worker of his own idea and self-will and constant clashes; even as it is, that has abounded and it is only the Mother's authority, the frame of work she has given and her skill in getting incompatibles to act together that has kept things going.

I do not find that Mother is a rigid disciplinarian. On the contrary, I have seen with what a constant leniency, tolerant patience and kindness she has met the huge mass of indiscipline, disobedience, self-assertion, revolt that has surrounded her, even abuse to her very face and violent letters overwhelming her with the worst kind of vituperation. A rigid disciplinarian would not have treated these things like that.

I do not know what ill-treatment visitors have received, apart from the insistence on rules of which you complain, but it cannot be a general complaint, otherwise the number of visitors would not be constantly increasing nor would so many people want to come back again or even come every time or so many want to stay on if the Mother allowed them. After all they do not come here on the basis of a social occasion but for Darshan of those whom they regard to be spiritually great or in the case of constant visitors for a share in the life of the Asram and for spiritual advantage and for both of these motives one would expect them to submit willingly to the conditions imposed and not to mind a little inconvenience.

As regards Golconde and its rules — they are not imposed elsewhere — there is a reason for them and they are not imposed

for nothing. In Golconde Mother has worked out her own idea through Raymond, Sammer and others. First, Mother believes in beauty as a part of spirituality and divine living; secondly, she believes that physical things have the Divine Consciousness underlying them as much as living things; and thirdly, that they have an individuality of their own and ought to be properly treated, used in the right way, not misused or improperly handled or hurt or neglected so that they perish soon or lose their full beauty or value; she feels the consciousness in them and is so much in sympathy with them that what in other hands may be spoilt or wasted in a short time lasts with her for years or decades. It is on this basis that she planned Golconde. First, she wanted a high architectural beauty, and in this she succeeded—architects and people with architectural knowledge have admired it with enthusiasm as a remarkable achievement; one spoke of it as the finest building of its kind he had seen, with no equal in all Europe or America; and a French architect, pupil of a great master, said it executed superbly the idea which his master had been seeking for but failed to realise; but also she wanted all the objects in it, the rooms, the fittings, the furniture to be individually artistic and to form a harmonious whole. This too was done with great care. Moreover, each thing was arranged to have its own use, for each thing there was a place, and there should be no mixing up, or confused and wrong use. But all this had to be kept up and carried out in practice; for it was easy for people living there to create a complete confusion and misuse and to bring everything to disorder and ruination in a short time. That was why the rules were made and for no other purpose. The Mother hoped that if the right people were accommodated there or others trained to a less rough and ready living than is common, her idea could be preserved and the wasting of all the labour and expense avoided.

Unfortunately the crisis of accommodation came and we were forced to house people in Golconde who could not be accommodated elsewhere and a careful choice could not be made. So, often there was damage and misuse and the Mother had to spend sometimes 200/300 Rupees after Darshan to repair

things and restore what had been realised. Z has taken the responsibility of the house and of keeping things right as much as possible. That was why she interfered in the handbag affair — it was as much a tragedy for the table as for the doctor, for it got scratched and spoiled by the handbag — and tried to keep both the bag and shaving utensils in the places that had been assigned for them. If I had been in the doctor's place, I would have been grateful to her for her care and solicitude instead of being upset by what ought to have been for him trifles although, because of her responsibility, they had for her their importance. Anyhow, this is the rationale for the rules and they do not seem to me to be meaningless regulation and discipline.

Finally, about financial arrangements. It has been an arduous and trying work for the Mother and myself to keep up this Asram, with its ever-increasing numbers, to make both ends meet and at times to prevent deficit budgets and their results, especially in this war time, when the expenses have climbed to a dizzy and fantastic height. Only one accustomed to these things or who had similar responsibilities can understand what we have gone through. Carrying on anything of this magnitude without any settled income could not have been done if there had not been the working of a Divine Force. Works of charity are not part of our work, there are other people who can see to that. We have to spend all on the work we have taken in hand and what we get is nothing compared to what is needed. We cannot undertake things that would bring in money in the ordinary ways. We have to use whatever means are possible. There is no general rule that spiritual men must do works of charity or they should receive and care for whatever visitors come or house and feed them. If we do it, it is because it has become part of our work. The Mother charges visitors for accommodation and food because she has expenses to meet and cannot make money out of air; she charges in fact less than her expense. It is quite natural that she should not like people to take advantage of her and allow those who try to take meals in the dining room under false pretences; even if they are a few at first, yet if this were allowed, a few would soon become a legion. As for people being

allowed to come in freely for Darshan without permission, which would soon convert me into a thing for show and an object of curiosity, often critical or hostile curiosity, it is I who would be the first to cry "stop".

I have tried to explain our standpoint and have gone to some length to do it. Whether it is agreed with or not, at any rate it is a standpoint and I think a rational one. I am writing only on the surface and I do not speak of what is behind or from the Yogic standpoint, the standpoint of the Yogic consciousness from which we act; that would be more difficult to express. This is merely for intellectual satisfaction, and there there is always room for dispute.

25 February 1945

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As for Golconde, it is in that house of all the 80 or more houses in the Asram that she has been trying to carry out her idea of physical things, their harmony and order and proper treatment, she has not been imposing it elsewhere except in the matter of cleanliness and hygiene, which are surely not objectionable. I may say that you are mistaken in thinking that everybody who stays in Golconde is in a state of misery or revolt. On the contrary, there are many who have asked to be put and are put there at their own request every time they come. And they are not Europeans. Mother thoroughly appreciated and praised the old Indian way of living, its simplicity, harmony and order when she saw it exemplified by X and his brother in the Asram, but that is not the way of living most prevalent nowadays which is a mixture. Chairs, tables, electric fans etc. are European introductions, but I don't suppose those who have got accustomed to them would like to give them up or return to the true simplicity of Indian life. That however is by the way. But I fail to see why you should treat this external trifles as of so stupendous an importance. Mother should be free to carry out her idea in this corner of her kingdom; all that is to be seen is that those who violently dislike it should not stay in Golconde.

25 October 1945

The French Book *L'Ether Vivant*

Many of the questions asked in your letter about the condition after death are dealt with in the French book *L'Ether Vivant*. This book was written by Paul Richard, but all the substance was taken by him from the Mother, as he himself had no knowledge about these things. You can send the book to the Mother and she will mark the passages. You should also read what is said in the *Conversations* about these things.

18 November 1931

Meeting the Dead

Is there any indication the Mother has received to tell her that my brother's soul really wanted at the end to come to her Light and the Master's?

Mother cannot say particularly because so many people come to her in the night for the passage to the other side whom she has not known in the body. Your brother may very well have been one of them and in view of X's account, there is little doubt that he must have been.

December 1933

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When Mother said that it was not good to try to meet the dead, she was speaking from a spiritual standpoint which is not usually known or regarded by the spiritists.

25 August 1936

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It is not for everything that the souls of the departed come direct to the Mother, but this is a special action of hers and usually she sees the persons whom she has to help. But she has seen only X's mental being and it was still interested in earthly things; his vital being she has not seen and it is that that usually comes for help. Some however come at a later stage of the passage and not at first.

8 December 1936

Speaking to People about Past Lives

The Mother only speaks to people about their past births when she sees definitely some scene or memory of their past in concentration; but this happens rarely nowadays. 30 June 1933

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Mother does not usually look into past lives; only when things come of themselves from the past she looks. 24 July 1934

Sending Ethereal Beings to the Sadhaks

X said that ever since he wrote the sonnet "Hieroglyphics" as a joke, sonnets no longer come to him; this, you said, is because sonnets have a being of their own which is shocked by any crudity, jesting or misuse. My mind then caught the idea that there are beings, probably of the intuitive plane, who have very subtle and refined vibrations. At times they enter human beings and then something of their peace, refinement and purity manifests in men. But if there is anger, passion, desire, vanity or unrefinement, they recede and live in their own region. These beings are ethereal, peaceful, pure, loving, shy, like beautiful children. One should not injure their sense of harmony, purity, refinement and beauty by allowing any lower vital crudities. Mother sends one of these beings to each of us according to his possibility.

There is much truth in what you write — there are beings of that kind and your description is good. But it is not to *each* one that Mother sends them — only to some when there is an opening.

28 January 1934

An Occult or Yogic Faculty

X has reported Mother's observation correctly but he does not seem to have understood it. The Mother never meant that by merely willing one could know at once what was in someone else or that all one's impressions about him would be spontaneously and infallibly correct. What she meant was that there

is a faculty or power (an occult or Yogic faculty) by which one can get the right perceptions and impressions and if one has the will to do so, one can develop it. Not at once, not by an easy method—tra la la and there you are: it may take years and one has to be careful and scrupulous about it. For these are intuitive perceptions and intuition is a thing that can easily be imitated by many other movements of consciousness that are much more fallible. Your impressions may be mental or vital and a mental or vital impression may have something to justify it or may not—but even in the first case there is no certainty at all that it will be correct; even if there is that something, it may be incorrectly caught or caught with much mixture of error, twisted into falsehood, put in the wrong way etc. etc. And there may be no justification at all; it may be a mere wrong formation of your own mind or vital or else somebody else's wrong impression conveyed to you and accepted by you as your own. Your impression may be the result of a want of affinity between you and the other person, so that if he impresses you as null and neutral, it is because you cannot feel what is in him, it does not come home to you—or, again, if you feel that he is in a wrong condition, it may be only because his vital vibrations rub yours the wrong way. There are lots of things like that which one must have the power to distinguish very carefully and exactly; until one knows one's own consciousness and its operations well, one cannot know the operations of the consciousness of others. But it is possible to develop a certain direct sight or a certain direct feeling or contact by which one can know, but only after much time and much careful, scrupulous and vigilant observation and self-training. Till then one can't go about saying that this is an advanced sadhak or that one is not advanced and that other is no good at all. Even if one knows, it is not necessary always to air one's knowledge.

9 February 1935

The Mother Takes upon Herself Difficulties and Illnesses

Why did the Mother fall ill last time, she who is beyond the reach of death and disease? Why did she take medicine like

her blind children, she who is the cause of all medicines? Why did she suffer innocently like her frail children? Was it all a show to mask her infiniteness? Kindly write something to stop these questions in my mind.

It is much easier for the sadhak by faith in the Mother to get free from illness than for the Mother to keep free — because the Mother by the very nature of her work had to identify herself with the sadhaks, to support all their difficulties, to receive into herself all the poison in their nature, to take up besides all the difficulties of the universal earth-Nature, including the possibility of death and disease in order to fight them out. If she had not done that, not a single sadhak would have been able to practise this Yoga. The Divine has to put on humanity in order that the human being may rise to the Divine. This is a simple truth, but nobody in the Asram seems able to understand that the Divine can do that and yet remain different from them — can still remain the Divine.

8 May 1933

*

People believe that their difficulties and illnesses are taken away by the Mother and so she sometimes suffers or, as X puts it, "Mother has to pay." Is this suffering due to the identity of consciousness that the Mother calls into play and thus enters into the depths of obscure Matter? But at that rate there would be too great an onrush of these things on her from many sadhaks. An idea comes to me of taking upon myself some of these difficulties and illnesses so that I can also suffer with her pleasantly?

Pleasantly? It would be anything but pleasant either for you or for us.

But perhaps all these ideas are only conjectures of people.

It is rather a crude statement of a fact. The Mother in order to do her work had to take all the sadhaks inside her personal being and consciousness; thus personally (not merely impersonally) taken inside, all the disturbances and difficulties in them including illness could throw themselves upon her in a way that

could not have happened if she had not renounced the self-protection of separateness. Not only illnesses of others could translate themselves into attacks on her body — these she could generally throw off as soon as she knew from what quarter and why it came — but their inner difficulties, revolts, outbursts of anger and hatred against her could have the same and a worse effect. That was the only danger for her (because inner difficulties are easily surmountable), but matter and the body are the weak point or crucial point of our Yoga, since this province has never been conquered by the spiritual Power, the old Yogas having either left it alone or used on it only a detailed mental and vital force, not the general spiritual force. It was the reason why after a serious illness caused by a terribly bad state of the Asram atmosphere, I had to insist on her partial retirement so as to minimise the most concrete part of the pressure upon her. Naturally the full conquest of the physical would revolutionise matters, but as yet it is the struggle.

31 March 1934

*

Is it inevitable that in the process of conversion and transformation all these resistances, disturbances, revolts should come? Could they be eliminated to some extent from the very beginning of one's sadhana so that there would be less of these things for the Mother to take into herself?

The nature of the terrestrial consciousness and of humanity being what it is, these things were to some extent inevitable. It is only a very few who escape with the slighter adverse movements only. But after a time these things should disappear. It does so disappear in individuals — but there seems to be a great difficulty in getting it to disappear from the atmosphere of the Asram — somebody or other always takes it up and from him it tries to spread to others. It is of course because there is behind it one of the principles of life according to the Ignorance — a deeply rooted tendency of vital Nature. But it is the very aim of sadhana to overcome that and substitute a truer and diviner vital Force.

1 April 1934

*

You have written to me that standing is not good for Mother, and yet I see the Mother standing in concentration on the staircase for at least fifteen minutes every night. Remembering what you told me, I feel so anxious. I feel she has only to sit down on a seat or a chair. Can it not be done, please?

When Mother stands on the stairs in full concentration it is quite a different thing from standing talking with people. In the former condition nothing can touch her. In the second she has to identify herself with the general physical consciousness and open herself to its forces, so the conditions are not the same. Nowadays there is an improvement in the physical, but still limits must be kept.

5 November 1934

*

There are people who tend to take away one's vital strength. What should one do? Should one not talk to others or merely exchange smiles with them or walk gravely past them? Should one try to help others at all?

The danger of helping others is the danger of taking upon oneself their difficulties. If one can keep oneself separate and help, this does not occur. But the tendency in helping is to take the person partially or completely into one's larger self. That is what the Mother has had to do with the sadhaks and the reason why she has sometimes to suffer — for one cannot always be on guard against any backwash when one is absorbed or in action. There is also the difficulty that the persons helped get the habit of drawing and pulling on your forces instead of leaving it to you to give just what you can and ought to give. And many other smaller possibilities one who helps others has to face.

29 January 1935

*

Somebody told me that when the Mother tries to do something with X, if his vital does not agree, he revolts against her with such a force that it sometimes brings illness to her body.

There are many who did that in the past. I don't know that he

does it now. But all bad thoughts upon the Mother or throwing of impurities on her may affect her body as she has taken the sadhaks into her consciousness, nor can she send these things back to them as it might hurt them.

17 March 1936

*

Do people really throw their impurities on the Mother or does she draw their impurities into herself in order to purify them?

There is not the slightest necessity for the Mother drawing impurities into herself—any more than for the sadhak inviting impurity to come into himself. Impurity has to be thrown away, not drawn in.

18 March 1936

*

I don't know whether the Mother was joking or was serious when she wrote to me: "But why should I have any desires either? You want me to be burdened with desires about you, so that you be free from desires? That might be good for you—not for me." I suppose this was a joke. Certainly we all wish to unload our desires on the Mother so that she may reject them or transform them.

The idea of unburdening desires, imperfections, impurities, illnesses on the Mother so that she may bear the results instead of the sadhaks is a curious one. I suppose it is a continuation of the Christian idea of Christ suffering on the cross for the sake of humanity. But it has nothing to do with the Yoga of transformation.

1 November 1936

*

Do our grumblings and imputations against the Mother hurt her in some way? Does this have any undesirable effect on her body?

I cannot say that it does not have an effect—sometimes it may not have, if she is on her guard, at other times it has. It is not the imputations that do it, but the force behind which throws the darkness in you and takes the form of a vital upsetting in you

but passes on to her as an attack on the body since other things in her are unattackable. That is why these moods should never be formed against her.

12 January 1937

*

What you saw is correct, but if the attitude of the sadhak is the true psychic attitude, then the Mother has not to suffer; she can act on them without anything falling on her.

22 January 1937

*

Mother has stopped the Pranam because something happened with her eyes. Sometimes we notice that she catches a cold. How do these things happen since she is the incarnated Divine?

It is due to attacks. As the material is not yet conquered, the Mother's body has to bear the attacks which come daily and to which the sadhaks freely open the doors. If she cut off her consciousness altogether from that of the sadhaks or put them outside her consciousness, these things would not happen.

8 February 1937

*

I could not help writing in order to know why the Mother's left cheek was swollen. I was shocked to see it at the Sunday meditation. Is it due to the impurities of the sadhaks thrown on her, which she gladly receives for our relief? Or is it due to some other reason?

It is due to the impurities of the sadhaks thrown on the Mother.

How calmly she bears the agonies of her children. Is there no end to it? Will it disappear after the full transformation of the physical?

There seems to be no remedy possible before the physical change. If the Mother puts an inner wall between her and the sadhaks, it would not happen, but then they would be unable to receive anything from her. If all were more careful to come to her with

their deepest or highest consciousness, then there would be less chance of these things happening.

3 May 1937

The Mother and Medicines

I know that we inflict a lot of undesirable things on the Mother and that sometimes she does not reject them, but takes them upon herself. But why should she not reject her cold and accept a medicine to do it? I am therefore enclosing a new phial, an olfactory; Mother should take half-a-dozen inhalations in each nostril four times a day. That is all that is necessary.

Mother does not use medicines so it is no use sending them to her. But there are people who send to her suggestions such as "Oh you are very ill, you won't be able to sit through the Pranam" and some of these are thrown with force and she has to work them out of the system, as happened today at Pranam. If you will give these people a medicine which will stop this habit of theirs, it will be very useful.

5 September 1936

*

I am afraid Mother still has a strong photophobia. X said there is ptosis also . . .

What is ptosis?

which may remain if neglected.

Why do people make such prognostications? Suggestions of the kind ought never to be made, mentally even — they might act like suggestions and do more harm than any good medicines could do.

X doesn't understand, and neither do I, why Mother doesn't take kindly to medicines and doctors when it could be cured in a short time, he says. Well, what could I say! Shall we stop medical reports or do you see them? Frankly, I don't know how much our allopathic medicines can help.

Then why don't you understand? If medicines can't help, what's the use of putting foreign matter in the eye merely because it is a medicine? Medicines have a quite different action on the Mother's body than they would have on yours or X's or anybody else's and the reaction is not usually favourable. Her physical consciousness is not the same as that of ordinary people — though even in ordinary people it is not so identical in all cases as science would have us believe.

1 February 1937

*

I am surprised to hear that even "prognostications" are very harmful. So far we have taken these things as simple superstitions.

Prognostications of that kind should not be lightly thought or spoken — especially in the case of the Mother — in other cases, even if there is a possibility or probability, they should be kept confidential from the person affected, unless it is necessary to inform. This is because of the large part played by state of consciousness and suggestion in illness.

What is ptosis? Ptosis means drooping of the upper eyelid by a paralysis temporary or otherwise.

But, confound it, there is nothing of the kind. The drooping of the eyelid was quite voluntary.

2 February 1937

*

Whatever little doctors have found by experience to be effective, you absolutely disallow. For instance, they recommend Calomel for diarrhoea; you say it is not to be given . . .

It is no use discussing these matters — the Mother's views are too far removed from the traditional nostrums to be understood by a medical mind, except those that have got out of the traditional groove or those who after long experience have seen things and can become devastatingly frank about the limitations of their own "science".

Milk of Magnesia is usually harmless; but it can also be harmful, as it was in this case.

Ideas differ. Both the Mother and X were horrified at the idea of a child of 4 months being given a purgative. The leading children's doctor in France told the Mother no child under 12 months should be given a purgative, as it is likely to do great harm and may be dangerous. But here, we understand, it is the practice to dose children freely with purgatives from their day of birth almost. Perhaps that and overadministration of medicines is one cause of excessive infant mortality.

4 April 1937

*

Once Mother asked me to try this method of diagnosis: instead of analysing the various possibilities and probabilities and then diagnosing by elimination, to just keep quiet and go at it. So also in the case of choosing medicines. Just wait for the true intuition of the thing to come.

Well, so that's how the Mother's statements are understood! A free permit for anything and everything calling itself an intuition to go crashing into the field of action! Go at it, indeed! Poor it!

What the Mother says in the matter is what she said to Dr. X with his entire agreement — viz. reading from symptoms by the doctors is usually a mere balancing between possibilities (of course except in clear and simple cases) and the conclusion is a guess. It may be a right guess and then it will be all right, or it may be a wrong guess and then all will be wrong unless Nature is too strong for the doctor and overcomes the consequences of his error — or at the least the treatment will be ineffective. On the contrary if one develops the diagnostic flair, one can see at once what is the real thing among the possibilities and see what is to be done. That is what the most successful doctors have, — they have this flashlight which shows them the true point. X agreed and said the cause of the guessing was that there were whole sets of symptoms which could belong to any one of several diseases and to decide is a most delicate and subtle business, no amount of book knowledge or reasoning will ensure a right decision. A

special insight is needed that looks through the symptoms and not merely at them. This last sentence, by the way, is my own, not X's. About development of intuition afterwards — no time tonight.

6 April 1937

*

I am afraid X has obstinate constipation. Treatment? Well, I am damned, for except enema castor oil is the medicine for children in our "science".

All "science" does not recommend castor oil for children — I think it is a nineteenth century fad which has prolonged itself. The Mother's "children's doctor" told her it should not be done — also in her own case when a child the doctors peremptorily stopped it on the ground that it spoiled the stomach and liver. I suppose you will say doctors disagree? They do! When Y's child reached Madras, the first doctor said "Stop mother's milk for three days", the second said "Mother's milk to be taken at once, at once!" So, sir. Anyhow for X Mother proposes diet first — small bananas Z will give, very good for constipation — papaya if available in the garden. Also as he is pimply, cocoanut water on an empty stomach. Afterwards we can see if medicine is necessary.

9 April 1937

The Mother and Eye Treatment

I believe the Mother is using glasses for reading. Would she like to try my treatment [*palming, etc.*]?

The Mother has seen that these methods are perfectly effective, but she cannot follow a treatment because she has no time. Her sight is variable: when she can rest and concentrate a little and do what is necessary, she can read without glasses. 8 July 1934

Giving Money to the Mother

You will find with this a letter from the Mother giving you her point of view with regard to the request for a written statement

from herself about approaching people for money. You must make X understand that this is not done and cannot be done. If he feels moved to do this as work for the Mother, the knowledge that it is needed should be enough. It is not a question of a public appeal for funds, but of getting friends and sympathisers to help. You will see from the Mother's letter the spirit in which it should be done.

circa 29 April 1938

*

The Mother has never objected to people who "cannot pay" residing or visiting the Asram without paying; she expects payment only from visitors who can pay. She did object strongly to the action of some rich visitors (on one occasion) who came here, spent money lavishly on purchases etc. and went off without giving anything to the Asram or even the smallest offering to the Mother, that is all.

21 October 1943

*

My book is going into a second edition. The publisher promises to send me what he owes me (to be offered to the Mother, of course). So far he hasn't sent me a pice. I wonder how much he will send in the end? Do you think I am getting too commercial?

If you give the money to the Mother, that can't be commercial; commerce implies personal profit, and here your profit is only spiritual.

2 April 1944

The Mother's Accounts

X showed me the play of numbers in his account book today. The total was Rs. 7 As. 7 Ps. 7. Today is also the 7th day of the 7th month of the year and after I decided to write to you about this I saw that the number on the door of the house where I was working was also 7. Elsewhere one does not come across such a play of numbers. I think it occurs here because the numbers (perhaps the occult beings of numbers) feel at ease in our atmosphere — as do the sparrows in the main building! — and they play with the numbers if one plays upon them and

loves them. In government departments and other places they feel the atmosphere mechanical, heavy and rigorous and so they do not find any joy in such play.

I suppose your explanation is correct — at least from the occult point of view. The Mother is always having these numerical harmonies in her accounts. 7 July 1936

7 July 1936

The Mother's Attire

Why does the Mother wear rich and beautiful clothes?

Beauty is as much an expression of the Divine as Knowledge, Power or Ananda. Does anyone ask why does the Mother want to manifest the divine consciousness by knowledge or by power and not by ignorance and weakness?² It would not be a more absurd or meaningless question than this one put by the vital against wearing artistic and beautiful dress. 27 February 1933

*

Does it make any difference to the Mother's consciousness whether she puts on the best saris or the old ones, whether she lives in a palace or in a forest? What do these outer things add to the inner reality?

Outer things are the expression of something in the inner reality. A fine sari or a palace are expressions of the principle of beauty in things and that is their main value. The Divine Consciousness is not bound by these things and has no attachment, but it is also not bound to abstain from them if beauty in things is part of its intended action. The Mother, when the Asram was still unformed, was wearing patched cotton saris; when she took up the work, it was necessary to change her habits, so she did so.

22 October 1935

² The Mother also replied to this question. She wrote: "Is it your idea that the Divine should be represented on earth by poverty and ugliness?" —Ed.

The Mother's Photograph

When I get sleepy during meditation, I often just sit in a quietly concentrated wakefulness and look at the Mother's photo or your photo. Can I get the same amount of benefit simply by looking at Mother's photo or yours with all the concentration I can command?

Yes, very many do.

Sometimes in that state I pray; sometimes the inside is void — no thoughts or words at all, so I simply gaze. Am I pursuing the right line?

Yes.

10 March 1933

The Mother's Naming of Cats

The Mother gave names for cats because they understand and answer; she has never given any for birds and does not wish to do it. Now even for cats she is not giving names. 28 April 1932

The Mother's Symbol

In the chakra which is printed on the book *The Mother*, what colours are appropriate for the central dot and for the "four powers"? I am thinking of preparing a powder design with a little addition at the circumference.

Centre and 4 powers white. The 12 all of different colours, in three groups, (1) top group red passing through orange towards yellow, (2) next group yellow passing through green towards blue, (3) blue passing through violet towards red. If white is not convenient, the centre may be gold (powder). 20 March 1934

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In the chakra for the central circle you have asked me to use either white or gold — suppose I use gold at the centre, then should I use white at the strap around it? In that case the straps

around the two bigger circles will have gold and the central strap alone will have white.

The central circle need not have a strap — simply a gold disc.

11 April 1934

*

I have frequently been thinking of the Mother's symbol (chakra) and its significance. I have understood it as follows:

Central circle — Transcendental power.

Four inner petals — Four powers working from the Supermind to Overmind.

Twelve outer petals — Division of four into twelve powers from Overmind to Intuition and mind.

Is my conception at all tenable?

Essentially (in general principle) the 12 powers are the vibrations that are necessary for the complete manifestation. These are the 12 seen from the beginning above the Mother's head. Thus there are really 12 rays from the sun, not 7, 12 planets etc.

As to the exact interpretation of the detail of the powers, I see nothing against the arrangement you have made. It can stand very well.

15 April 1934

The Mother's Flag

About the blue flag. I presume you mean the flag with the white lotus. If so, it is the Mother's flag, for the white lotus is her symbol as the red lotus is mine. The blue of the flag is meant to be the colour of Krishna and so represents the spiritual or Divine Consciousness which it is her work to establish so that it may reign upon earth. This is the meaning of the flag being used as the Ashram flag, that our work is to bring down this consciousness and make it the leader of the world's life.

14 March 1949

Section Five

On Three Works of the Mother

On Prières et Méditations de la Mère

General Comments on the Mother's *Prières*¹

There are some prayers of the Mother written before she came here in 1914 in which there are ideas of transformation and manifestation. Did she have these ideas long before she came here?

The Mother had been spiritually conscious from her youth, even from her childhood, upward and she had done sadhana and developed this knowledge very long before she came to India.

23 December 1933

*

In some of the Mother's prayers which are addressed to "divin Maître" I find the words: "avec notre divine Mère". How can the Mother and "divin Maître" have a "divine Mère"? It is as if the Mother was not the "divine Mère" and there was some other Mother, and the "divin Maître" was not the Transcendent and had also a "divine Mère"! Or is it that all these are addressed to something impersonal?

The Prayers are mostly written in an identification with the earth-consciousness. It is the Mother in the lower nature addressing the Mother in the higher nature, the Mother herself carrying on the sadhana of the earth-consciousness for the transformation praying to herself above from whom the forces of transformation come. This continues till the identification of the earth-consciousness and the higher consciousness is effected. The word "notre" is general, I believe, referring to all born into the earth-consciousness — it does not mean "the Mother of

¹ First published in 1932 as *Prières et Méditations de la Mère*, this book is now published as *Prières et Méditations* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1990). The page numbers given after phrases quoted from the prayers in this subsection refer to the 1990 edition. Translations of the French words are given in the Note on the Texts. — Ed.

the ‘*Divin Maître*’ and myself”. It is the Divine who is always referred to as *Divin Maître* and *Seigneur*. There is the Mother who is carrying on the sadhana and the Divine Mother, both being one but in different poises, and both turn to the *Seigneur* or Divine Master. This kind of prayer from the Divine to the Divine you will find also in the Ramayan and the Mahabharat.

21 August 1936

*

Mother, I have started reading your prayers in the French original with X. May I get one copy for myself?

The rule is that Mother never gives a copy unless she gets a letter in French written by the person without help asking for it. He must know enough French to do that.

14 September 1936

Comments on Specific *Prières*

In her prayer of 17 May 1914, the Mother says, “*Telles furent les deux phrases que j'écrivis hier par une sorte de nécessité absolue. La première, comme si la puissance de la prière ne serait complète que si elle était tracée sur le papier.*” [p. 158]

Is it true that a prayer is less powerful when it is kept within oneself and not expressed in speech or writing? Is its expression necessary to make it completely powerful?

It was not meant as a general rule — it was only a necessity felt with regard to that particular prayer and that experience. It all depends on the person, the condition, the need of the moment or of that stage or phase of the consciousness. These things in spiritual experience are always plastic and variable. In some conditions or in one phase or at one moment expression may be needed to bring out the effectuating force of the prayer or the stability of the experience; in another condition or phase or at another moment it may be the opposite, expression would rather disperse the force or break the stability.

21 June 1936

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Nothing seems more important to me than that “*Ta splendeur*

veut rayonner" [p. 192], as the Mother says in her prayer of 16 June 1914. Ideas of sadhana or of perfection for oneself or of being an instrument seem flat and insipid. After all, the individual does not really exist when considered from the standpoint of the vast universal movement of consciousness.

It is correct. Perfection for oneself is not the true ideal; sadhana and instrumentation are only useful as a means for the "*rayonnement*".

22 April 1936

*

The passage in the *Prières* that came up tonight is this: "*et le raisonnement est une faculté humaine, c'est-à-dire individuelle*" [p. 201]. I am not able to see what it points to.

When the divine consciousness is veiled, one has to fall back on the reason, but the human reason is an individual action quite unreliable. That is the sense.

18 June 1932

*

The Mother says in her prayer of 31 July 1914 that spiritual experience is willed ("*elle est consciente, voulue*" [p. 231]) by the Divine. Am I then to suppose that the dearth or abundance of experiences in any given case is willed by the Divine?

To say so has no value unless you realise all things as coming from the Divine. One who has realised as the Mother had realised in the midst of terrible sufferings and difficulties that even these came from the Divine and were preparing her for her work can make spiritual use of such an attitude. For others it may lead to wrong conclusions.

10 May 1934

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The Mother, in her prayer of 4 August 1914, says: "*Les hommes, poussés par le conflit des forces, accomplissent un sublime sacrifice*" [p. 235]. Apparently she refers to the great war; but as a result of that war, has any "*pure lumière*" filled the hearts of men or the "*Force Divine*" spread on earth as she says later in the same prayer; has anything beneficial come

out of that chaos? Since the nations are once more preparing for war and are in a state of constant conflict, there seems to be no indication of any change in the inner condition of men. People want war. Even people in a country like India seem to secretly wish for another great war. Hardly anyone seems to require Peace, Light or Love.

There has been a change for the worse—the descent of the vital world into the human. On the other hand except in the “possessed” nations there is a greater longing for peace and feeling that such things ought not to happen. India did not get any real touch of the war. However what the Mother was thinking of was an opening to the spiritual truth. That has at least tried to come. There is a widespread dissatisfaction with the old material civilisation, a seeking for some deeper light and truth—only unfortunately it is being taken advantage of by the old religions and only a very small minority is consciously searching for the new Light.

9 June 1936

*

You say that after the great war there was “the descent of the vital world into the human”. But did not the vital world already descend on earth—in Matter—even before human beings came? What other vital world remained yet to descend into the human? And how is it that it decided to come down just at present—to prevent the higher Light from coming down or finding room in the human world?

When there is a pressure on the vital world due to the preparing Descent from above, that world usually precipitates something of itself into the human. The vital world is very large and far exceeds the human in extent. But usually it dominates by influence not by descent. Of course the effort of this part of the vital world is always to maintain humanity under its sway and prevent the higher Light.

9 June 1936

*

If, as you say, there has been a “change for the worse” due to the descent of the vital world, would it not make the

supramental descent in the earth-consciousness impossible or postpone its coming to some distant future instead of here and now? Moreover, the “possessed” nations are endowed with all the possible material power, making it difficult for any movement of peace to be successful. Except for their egoistic plans, nothing will be allowed to succeed.

The vital descent cannot prevent the supramental — still less can the possessed nations do it by their material power, since the supramental descent is primarily a spiritual fact which will bear its necessary outward consequences. What previous vital descents have done is to falsify the Light that came down as in the history of Christianity where it took possession of the teaching and distorted it and deprived it of any widespread fulfilment. But the supermind is by definition a Light that cannot be distorted if it acts in its own right and by its own presence. It is only when it holds itself back and allows inferior Powers of consciousness to use a diminished and already deflected Truth that the knowledge can be seized by the vital Forces and made to serve their own purpose.

12 June 1936

*

In her prayer of 16 August 1914, the Mother refers to “*chacun des grands êtres Asouriques qui ont résolu d'être Tes serviteurs*” [p. 244]. How is it that the Asuras have determined to be the servants of the Divine? Is it exploitation or a “*coup de diplomatie*”?

It was in reference to Asuras who had taken birth in human bodies — a thing they usually avoid if they can, for they prefer to possess human beings without taking birth — with the claim that they wanted to regenerate themselves by serving the Divine and doing his work. It did not succeed very well. 15 June 1936

*

Who are the “*grands êtres Asouriques*” mentioned by the Mother who had taken birth in human bodies claiming to serve the Divine? Since they are “*grands*” they must have been well-known persons. I can see only one — Rasputin. Hitler,

Stalin and Co. do not claim to serve the Divine.

Mother was not speaking of these but of others met by herself. But “grands” here does not mean great in the worldly sense, that is incarnating in famous people, but powerful in the vital world.

20 June 1936

*

In her prayer of 8 October 1914, the Mother says: “*La joie contenue dans l'activité est compensée et équilibrée par la joie plus grande peut-être encore contenue dans le retrait de toute activité*” [p. 286]. This state of “greater joy” (“*la joie plus grande*”), Mother explains, is that of Sachchidananda. Does this not suggest that there is a joy in non-activity superseding that of activity? If such be the case, one would naturally aspire for this greater joy, since an ever greater joy is the aim of our sadhana. Is it not so?

Do you think the Mother has a rigid mind like you people and was laying down a hard and fast rule for all time and all people and all conditions? It refers to a certain stage when the consciousness is sometimes in activity and when not in activity is withdrawn in itself. Afterwards comes a stage when the Sachchidananda condition is there in work also. There is a still farther stage when both are as it were one, but that is the supramental. The two states are the silent Brahman and the active Brahman and they can alternate (1st stage), coexist (2d stage), fuse (3d stage). If you reach even the first stage then you can think of applying Mother’s dictum, but why misapply it now?

My question is this: can this state of greater joy, Sachchidananda, be realised while one is actually doing work?

Certainly it is realisable in work. Good Lord! how could the integral Yoga exist if it were not?

22 December 1934

*

In her prayer of 3 November 1914, the Mother says that “*dans tous les coins du monde une de Tes divines pierres est posée par la puissance de la pensée consciente et formatrice*”

[p. 296]. Is this not similar to the fact that when Rama came he had with him some Devas and other higher beings to assist him in his work on the earth? I believe there are various such “divine stones” (“divines pierres”) now in various countries who will be gradually called to assist in the work of manifestation. Perhaps just now they are not awakened and called.

It is very probable. But at present it is only in France that anyone is awake, with some movement towards it in America. People from other parts have sometimes come and gone, but they were evidently not the stones chosen.

5 September 1936

*

The Mother’s prayer of 12 December 1914 begins: “*Il faut à chaque instant savoir tout perdre pour tout gagner*” [p. 311]. The Isha Upanishad says: “*tena tyaktena bhuñjithāḥ*”. To gain all by losing all comes to the same thing as to enjoy by renouncing. Both ideas seem to have the same source in the depths.

Yes, certainly. It is essentially the same truth put in different ways. It might be put in a negative form — “if we cling to things as they are in their imperfection in the Ignorance, we cannot have them in their truth and perfection in the Divine Light, Harmony and Ananda.”

16 August 1935

*

[In her prayer of 20 December 1916, the Mother wrote out a long “communication” she received in her evening meditation from Çakya-Mouni (pp. 366–67). A disciple asked who this was.]

Çakya-Mouni is a name of Buddha — “the sage of the Çakyas” — the clan to which Buddha belonged by birth and of which his father was the “king”.

*

Last night I was reading the Mother’s prayer of 21 December 1916 and I was struck by this: “*Il [mon être] sait que cet état*

d'amour actif doit être constant et impersonnel, c'est-à-dire tout à fait indépendant des circonstances et des personnes, puisqu'il ne peut et ne doit être concentré sur aucune en particulier” [p. 369]. This gave me a sort of key to the ever-stormy trouble in my own nature. I always expect some sort of return when I do anything for anybody. That should go. I should neither have a clinging for such returns nor any attachment to human contacts, however soothing. Without a repudiation of the human way of approach, I can never establish any harmony within which is “independent of circumstances or persons”. The difficulty, of course, is that Divine Love appears to me too impersonal and cold, that is, lacking in warmth though not a cold harmony. But perhaps Divine Love is not like that.

Love cannot be cold — for there is no such thing as cold love, but the love of which the Mother speaks in that passage is something very pure, fixed and constant; it does not leap like fire and sink for want of fuel, but is steady and all-embracing and self-existent like the light of the sun. There is also a divine love that is personal, but it is not like the ordinary personal human love dependent on any return from the person — it is personal but not egoistic, — it goes from the real being in the one to the real being in the other. But to find that, liberation from the ordinary human way of approach is necessary.

21 November 1936

*

X has given me a book, *Eveillez-vous*, in which there are some ideas similar to our own. For example, there are some lines about “someone coming down”, put in a Theosophical way. And there is the idea that when the Awakening comes, there will be strong resistance from those who are opposed to evolution; in other words the idea of hostile beings is there. Also the sentence, “*La Paix régnera sur terre*” — has the author not copied these words from the Mother’s prayers?

Not necessarily, as the phrase can easily come to one who has read the Bible and the English are very biblical. The idea of the hostile beings also is not new, in fact it is as old as the Veda. The expectation of the Advent is also pretty widespread, as according

to the old prophecies it must be when the Advent is due.

16 September 1935

Hearing the Mother Read Her *Prières*

Today as I sat on the staircase hearing the Mother read from *Prières et Méditations*, I felt a thrilling sensation, as if all the parts of my being — body, mental, vital and psychic — were aspiring. How did this thrilling sensation come?

When an intense Power is put out, it will naturally give a thrill to those who receive it.

Reading the Mother's *Prières*

While reading Mother's *Prières* I feel as if I am not reading the words or thoughts but contacting something quiet, pleasant and formless behind them.

Yes, it is so. The words are only a vehicle. When the consciousness opens one feels all that is behind the words.

11 March 1933

On Conversations with the Mother

Comments on Specific Conversations¹

The Mother asks: “What do you want the Yoga for? To get power?” [p. 1] Does “power” here mean the power to communicate one’s own experience to others?

Power is a general term—it is not confined to a power to communicate. The most usual form of power is control over things, persons, events, forces.

“What is required is concentration — concentration upon the Divine with a view to an integral and absolute consecration to its Will and Purpose” [p. 1]. Is the Divine’s Will different from its Purpose?

The two words have not the same meaning. Purpose means the intention, the object in view towards which the Divine is working. Will is a wider term than that.

“Concentrate in the heart” [p. 1]. What is concentration?
What is meditation?

Concentration here means gathering of the consciousness into one centre and fixing it on one object or on one idea or in one condition. Meditation is a general term which can include many kinds of inner activity.

1 January 1937

*

In *Conversations* the Mother says: “A fire is burning there, in

¹ These conversations of 1929 were first published in 1931 as *Conversations with the Mother*. They now form the first part of *Questions and Answers 1929–1931 (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 2003)*, volume 3 of the *Collected Works of the Mother*. The page numbers given after quoted passages in this subsection refer to the 2003 edition.—Ed.

the deep quietude of the heart” [p. 1]. Is this the psychic fire or the psychic being?

A fire is not a being — it is the psychic fire, an intense condition of aspiration.

*

“A fire is burning there. . . . It is the divinity in you — your true being. Hear its voice, follow its dictates” [p. 1]. I have never seen this fire in me. Yet I feel I know the divinity in me. I feel I hear its voice and I try my utmost to follow its dictates. Should I doubt my feeling?

No, what you feel is probably the intimation from the psychic being through the mind. To be directly conscious of the psychic fire, one must have the subtle vision and subtle sense active or else the direct action of the psychic acting as a manifest power in the consciousness.

“We have all met in previous lives” [p. 3]. Who precisely are “we”? Do both of you remember me? Did I often serve you for this work in the past?

It is a general principle announced which covers all who are called to the work. At the time the Mother was seeing the past (or part of it) of those to whom she spoke and that is why she said this. At present we are too much occupied with the crucial work in the physical consciousness to go into these things. Moreover we find that it encouraged a sort of vital romanticism in the sadhaks which made them attach more importance to these things than to the hard work of sadhana, so we have stopped speaking of past lives and personalities.

2 January 1937

*

In *Conversations* the Mother says: “We have all met in previous lives. . . . We are of one family and have worked through ages for the victory of the Divine” [p. 3]. Is this true of all people who come and stay here? But there have been many who came and went away.

Those who went away were also of these and still are of that circle. Temporary checks do not make any difference to the essential truth of the soul's seeking.

In what way have we “worked through ages for the victory of the Divine”? How much has been achieved till now?

By the victory is meant the final emergence of the embodied consciousness on earth from the bondage of the Ignorance. That had to be prepared through the ages by a spiritual evolution. Naturally the work up till now has been a preparation of which the long spiritual effort and experience of the past has been the outcome. It has reached a point at which the decisive effort has become possible.

18 June 1933

*

“There are two paths of Yoga, one of *tapasyā* (discipline) and the other of surrender” [p. 4]. Once you interpreted a vision I had as Agni, the fire of purification and tapasya, producing the Sun of Truth. What path do I follow? What place has tapasya in the path of surrender? Can one do absolutely without tapasya in the path of surrender?

There is a tapasya that takes place automatically as the result of surrender and there is a discipline that one carries out by one’s own unaided effort—it is the latter that is meant in the “two paths of Yoga”. But Agni as the fire of tapasya can burn in either case.

4 January 1937

*

The Mother, in her *Conversations*, says that “the first effect of Yoga . . . is to take away the mental control” [p. 5] so that the ideas and desires which were so long checked become surprisingly prominent and create difficulties. Would you not call these forces the consequence of yogic pressure?

They were not prominent because they were getting some satisfaction or at least the vital generally was getting indulged in one way or another. When they are no longer indulged then they

become obstreperous. But they are not new forces created by the Yoga — they were there all the time.

What is meant by the mental control being removed, is that the mental simply kept them in check but could not remove them. So in Yoga the mental has to be replaced by the psychic or spiritual self-control which could do what the mental cannot. Only many sadhaks do not make this exchange in time and withdraw the mental control merely.

12 May 1933

*

“The strength of such impulses as those of sex lies usually in the fact that people take too much notice of them” [p. 5].

What are the other impulses referred to?

It refers to strong vital impulses.

“The whole world is full of the poison. You take it in with every breath. If you exchange a few words with an undesirable man or even if such a man merely passes by you, you may catch the contagion from him” [p. 6]. How long is a sadhak subject to this fear of catching contagion? I feel I won’t catch such a contagion now. Is my feeling trustworthy?

I don’t know that it is. One has to go very far on the path before one is so secure as that.

4 January 1937

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In *Conversations* the Mother says that if the central being has surrendered, then the chief difficulty is gone [p. 7]. What is this central being? Is it the psychic?

The central being is the Purusha. If it is surrendered, then all the other beings can be offered to the Divine and the psychic being brought in front.

18 April 1933

*

In *Conversations* the Mother says: “One who dances and jumps and screams has the feeling that he is somehow very unusual in his excitement; and his vital nature takes great

pleasure in that” [p. 11]. Does she mean that one should be usual instead of unusual in one’s excitement during spiritual experience?

The Mother did not mean that one must be usual in one’s excitement at all—she meant that the man is not only excited but also wants to be unusual (extraordinary) in his excitement. The excitement itself is bad and the desire to seem extraordinary is worse.

7 June 1933

*

“But to those who possess the necessary basis and foundation we say, on the contrary, ‘Aspire and draw’ ” [p. 11]. Does this capacity to aspire and draw indicate a great advance already made towards perfection?

No. It is a comparatively elementary stage.

5 January 1937

*

In the chapter on dream in the *Conversations*, I came across the following passage: “In sleep you fell into the grip of these subconscious² regions and they opened and swallowed all that you had laboriously built up in your conscious hours” [p. 15]. If these regions swallow all one has achieved during the day, is it not necessary to be conscious at night as well as in the day?

At night, when one sinks into the subconscious after being in a good state of consciousness, we find that state gone and we have to labour to get it back again. On the other hand, if the sleep is of the better kind, one may wake up in a good condition. Of course, it is better to be conscious in sleep, if one can.

25 June 1933

*

“Spiritual experience means the contact with the Divine in oneself (or without, which comes to the same thing in that domain)” [p. 17]. What is meant by the Divine “without”?

² In the text of Conversations, the word used is “unconscious”, not “subconscious”.
—Ed.

Does it mean the cosmic Divine or the transcendental Divine or both?

It means the Divine seen outside in things, beings, events etc. etc.

Was Jeanne d'Arc's nature transformed even a little because of her relation with the two archangels, the two beings of the Overmind? [pp. 17–18]

I don't see how the question of transformation comes in. Jeanne d'Arc was not practising Yoga or seeking transformation.

5 January 1937

*

"You have no longer anything that you can call your own; you feel everything as coming from the Divine, and you have to offer it back to its source. When you can realise that, then even the smallest thing to which you do not usually pay much attention or care, ceases to be trivial and insignificant; it becomes full of meaning and it opens up a vast horizon beyond" [p. 23]. Is this as elementary a stage as the stage of "aspire and draw"?³

Not so elementary.

"But if we want the Divine to reign here we must give all we have and are and do here to the Divine" [p. 25]. If one does this completely, has he anything more to do?

No. But it is not easy to do it completely.

How can we recognise someone who gives all he has and is and does to the Divine?

You can't, unless you have the inner vision.

14 January 1937

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³ See the letter of 5 January 1937 on page 614.—Ed.

What does Mother mean by this sentence in *Conversations*: “When you eat, you must feel that it is the Divine who is eating through you” [p. 23]?

It means an offering of the food not to the ego or desire but to the Divine, who is behind all action.

11 January 1935

*

In Chapter 7 of *Conversations*, there is a paragraph which I quote below: “The condition to be aimed at, the real achievement of Yoga, the final perfection and attainment, for which all else is only a preparation, is a consciousness in which it is impossible to do anything without the Divine; for then if you are without the Divine, the very source of your action disappears; knowledge, power, all are gone. But so long as you feel that the powers you use are your own, you will not miss the Divine support” [p. 26]. I am unable to follow the last line. Will my lord explain it to me?

It means that in the full spiritual consciousness the sense of separate existence and my and mine disappear. All depends on the Divine and exists only by the Divine. The ordinary consciousness does not feel or miss this Divine support because it takes as its own the knowledge and power that are given to it; it is quite satisfied with that and is not aware of the Divine Existence behind it, or the Divine Force and Knowledge.

19 April 1937

*

“For there is nothing in the world which has not its ultimate truth and support in the Divine” [p. 27]. To know this perfectly by experience is to have a very great attainment, perhaps the final attainment, I think. Am I right?

Yes.

“Obviously, what has happened had to happen; it would not have been, if it had not been intended” [p. 28]. Then what is the place of repentance in man’s life? Has it any place in the life of a sadhak?

The place of repentance is in its effect for the future—if it induces the nature to turn from the state of things that brought about the happening. For the sadhak however it is not repentance but recognition of a wrong movement and the necessity of its not recurring that is needed.

“ . . . you are tied to the chain of Karma, and there, in that chain, whatever happens is rigorously the consequence of what has been done before” [p. 30]. Does “before” mean all the past lives, beginning from the very first up to this one?

That is taking things in the mass. In a metaphysical sense whatever happens is the consequence of all that has gone before up to the moment of the action. Practically, particular consequences have particular antecedents in the past and it is these that are said to determine it.

From where are these quotations? In the exact intention of a sentence much sometimes depends on the context.

19 January 1937

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“The intellect that believes too much in its own importance and wants satisfaction for its own sake, is an obstacle to the higher realisation.

But this is true not in any special sense or for the intellect alone, but generally and of other faculties as well. For example, people do not regard an all-engrossing satisfaction of the vital desires or the animal appetites as a virtue; the moral sense is accepted as a mentor to tell one the bounds that one may not transgress. It is only in his intellectual activities that man thinks he can do without any such mentor or censor!” [p. 33]

The subject is too large for any special instances to be usefully given, as an instance can only illustrate one side or field of a very various action. The point is that people take no trouble to see whether their intellect is giving them right thoughts, right conclusions, right views on things and persons, right indications about their conduct or course of action. They have their idea and accept it as truth or follow it simply because it is *their* idea.

Even when they recognise that they have made mistakes of the mind, they do not consider it of any importance nor do they try to be more careful mentally than before. In the vital field people know that they must not follow their desires or impulses without check or control, they know that they ought to have a conscience or a moral sense which discriminates what they can or should do and what they cannot or should not do; in the field of intellect no such care is taken. Men are supposed to follow their intellect, to have and assert their own ideas right or wrong without any control; the intellect, it is said, is man's highest instrument and he must think and act according to its ideas. But this is not true; the intellect needs an inner light to guide, check and control it quite as much as the vital. There is something above the intellect which one has to discover and the intellect should be only an intermediary for the action of that source of true Knowledge.

23 March 1937

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"Many people would tell you wonderful tales of how the world was built and how it will proceed in the future, how and where you were born in the past and what you will be hereafter, the lives you have lived and the lives you will still live. All this has nothing to do with spiritual life" [p. 40]. Is what such people say complete humbug? Is there a process other than the spiritual by which one can know all these things?

Often it is, but even if it is correct, it has nothing spiritual in it. Many mediums, clairvoyants or people with a special faculty, tell you these things. That faculty is no more spiritual than the capacity to build a bridge or to cook a nice dish or to solve a mathematical problem. There are intellectual capacities, there are occult capacities,—that is all.

20 January 1937

*

"They [*human beings who are like vampires*] are not human; there is only a human form or appearance. . . . Their method is to try first to cast their influence upon a man; then they enter

slowly into his atmosphere and in the end may get complete possession of him, driving out entirely the real human soul and personality” [p. 42]. My younger brother has married a girl who, the Mother has said, is vampirelike to some extent. Is he then under all these risks? What precautions should he take? Shall I warn him?

First of all what is meant is not that the vampire or vital being even in possession of a human body tries to possess yet another human being. All that is the description of how a disembodied (vampire) vital being takes possession of a human body without being born into it in the ordinary way — for that is their desire, to possess a human body but not by the way of birth. Once thus humanised, the danger they are for others is that they feed on the vitality of those who are in contact with them — that is all.

Secondly in this case, Mother only said vampirelike to some extent. That does not mean that she is one of these beings, but has to some extent the habit of feeding on the vitality of others. There is no need to say anything to your brother — it would only disturb him and not help in the least.

27 January 1937

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In *Conversations* the Mother speaks of the power of thought: “Let us say, for instance, that you have a keen desire for a certain person to come and that, along with this vital impulse of desire, a strong imagination accompanies the mental form you have made. . . . And if there is a sufficient power of will in your thought-form, if it is a well-built formation, it will arrive at its own realisation” [pp. 50–51]. In the example given, suppose one has no strong desire that a person should come, but still thoughts or imaginations loosely form in the mind. Would that loose formation go and induce that person to come?

It might; especially if that person were himself desirous of coming, it could give the decisive push. But in most cases desire or will behind the thought-force would be necessary.

26 August 1936

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In *Conversations* the Mother says about the hostile forces: "If you have overlooked in your own being even a single detail, they will come and put their touch upon that neglected spot and make it so painfully evident that you will be forced to change" [p. 66]. When sadhaks overlook even a single detail on the path of transformation, is it not possible that the Divine will make them conscious of it rather than becoming conscious through a painful wound by the hostile forces?

If they are sufficiently open to the Divine it can be done—but most sadhaks have too much egoism and lack of faith and obscurity and self-will and vital desires,—it is that that shuts them to the Mother and calls in the action of the hostile forces.

Those who cannot reject their lower nature fully are made to suffer at the hands of the hostile forces and get wounded by them. What is the best means for them to go forward?

Faith in the Mother and complete surrender.

"This illusion of action is one of the greatest illusions of human nature. It hurts progress because it brings on you the necessity of rushing always into some excited movement" [p. 67]. What is meant by "illusion of action"?

Illusion means that they think their action is all-important and its egoistic objects are the truth that must be followed.

17 June 1933

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In *Conversations* the Mother says about the nervous envelope: "Depression and discouragement have a very adverse effect; they cut out holes in it, as it were, in its very stuff, render it weak and unresisting and open to hostile attacks an easy passage" [p. 89]. In one sense this means that a man with goodwill should not discourage anyone from his wrong ideas, impulses or movements. There is also the way of keeping silent when dealing with such a person—but even that sometimes hurts him more than a point-blank discouragement.

The knowledge about the bad effect of depression is meant for the sadhak to learn to avoid these things. He cannot expect people to flatter his failures or mistakes or indulge his foibles merely because he has the silly habit of indulging in depression and hurting his nervous envelope if that is done. To keep himself free from depression is his business, not that of others. For instance some people have the habit of getting into depression if the Mother does not comply with their desires—it does not follow that the Mother must comply with their desires in order to keep them jolly—they must learn to get rid of this habit of mind. So with people's want of encouragement or praise for all they do. One can be silent or non-intervening, but if even that depresses them, it is their own fault and nobody else's.

Would the bad effects of depression and discouragement indicated by the Mother happen in ordinary life also?

Of course, it is the same in ordinary life—depression is always hurtful. But in sadhana it is more serious because it becomes a strong obstacle to the smooth and rapid progress towards the goal.

18 July 1936

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In *Conversations* the Mother writes: "Surrender will not diminish, but increase; it will not lessen or weaken or destroy your personality, it will fortify and aggrandise it" [p. 114]. Is this meant in an external sense or in an internal sense only?

It is meant in the inner sense only—no outer greatness is meant. All submission is regarded by the ego as lowering and lessening itself, but really submission to the Divine increases and strengthens the being, that is what is meant.

25 August 1937

*

It seems difficult to understand when the Mother says that spiritual sacrifice is joyful [p. 114].

She was speaking of the true spiritual sacrifice of self-giving, not the bringing of an unwilling heart to the altar.

17 October 1935

A Translation of *Conversations*

About the Gujarati translation of the *Conversations* the Mother had told you she did not want it published or sent outside. In the original or in translation, the book is not one meant to be given or shown to everybody. If X wants to make copies for himself and Y he can do so; but, as it comes from the Asram, it might be taken for an authoritative issue from the Asram. It should be understood that it is *your* translation, only made for your personal use; we have not seen it and cannot therefore guarantee its correctness.

29 March 1932

Reading the Mother's *Conversations* and *Prières*

I have a friend in Dacca to whom I want to send the Mother's *Conversations* and her *Prières*. This lady knows French, though she knows nothing about the Yoga or about you. If you think I may send the books — after seeing her photo — I shall send them.

The Prayers ought not to be given to anyone who is not practising Yoga. The "Conversations" are for those who are interested in Yoga.

8 December 1933

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When I read the Mother's *Conversations* or her *Prières*, I often feel as if I come in contact with her consciousness. If one read these two books constantly and thought about them alone, could one not make one's consciousness more and more intense till it becomes like Mother's? Of course, it might be only the mental that would be intensified and elevated, but perhaps by that intensity the vital and other parts of the being could pass beyond their usual condition.

It is possible to intensely identify oneself with the Mother's consciousness through what you read — in that case the result you speak of could come. It could also have an effect on the vital up to a certain point.

21 August 1935

On *Entretiens avec la Mère*

Comments on Specific *Entretiens*¹

In *Entretiens* the Mother says: “*Même ceux qui ont la volonté de s'enfuir [du monde], quand ils arrivent de l'autre côté, peuvent trouver que la fuite ne sert pas à grand-chose après tout*” [p. 28]. What does “arrivent de l'autre côté” mean? Does it mean “when they come into *this* world” or “when they go into the world of silence which they realised”?

No — “arrivent de l'autre côté” simply means “when they die”. What Mother intended was that when they actually arrive at their Nirvana they find it is not the ultimate solution or largest realisation of the Supreme and they must eventually come back and have their share of the world action to reach that largest realisation.

2 May 1935

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The Mother says in *Entretiens*: “*En fait, la mort a été attachée à toute vie sur terre*” [p. 41]. The words “*En fait*” and “*attachée*” tend to give the impression that after all death is inevitable. But the preceding sentence (“*Si cette croyance pouvait être rejetée, d'abord de la mentalité consciente, . . . la mort ne serait plus inévitable*”) brings in an ambiguity because it does not make death so inevitable; it introduces a condition, an “if” by which death could be avoided. But the categoricity of the sentence with “*En fait*” rather decreases one’s expectation of a material immortality. Moreover, the “if” in the other sentence is too formidable to be satisfied.

There is no ambiguity that I can see. “*En fait*” and “*attachée*” do not convey any sense of inevitability. “*En fait*” means simply

¹ *Entretiens avec la Mère* is the Mother’s translation of her conversations of 1929, which were spoken in English. This translation is now published as the first part of *Entretiens 1929–1931* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1994). The page numbers given after the quoted passages in this subsection refer to the 1994 edition.—Ed.

that in fact, actually, as things are at present all life (on earth) has death attached to it as its end; but it does not in the least convey the idea that it can never be otherwise or that this is the unalterable law of all existence. It is at present a fact for certain reasons which are stated,—due to certain mental and physical circumstances—if these are changed, death is not inevitable any longer. Obviously the alteration can only come “if” certain conditions are satisfied—all progress and change by evolution depends upon an “if” which gets satisfied. If the animal mind had not been pushed to develop speech and reason, mental man would never have come into existence,—but the “if”, a stupendous and formidable one, was satisfied. So with the ifs that condition a farther progress.

31 July 1936

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There are some lines in *Entretiens* which I do not find in the English *Conversations*. For example, in the conversation about hostile forces, the Mother speaks about some “*êtres pervers et hostiles de plus grande envergure et d'une plus haute origine que tous ceux dont j'ai parlé jusqu'à présent*” [p. 69]. These new hostiles are not of the lower cosmic plane. If they are of a “*plus haute origine*”, they must belong to the higher worlds. Does this mean that the hostiles exist in the higher worlds up to the Supramental?

I believe the Mother was referring to the mental Asuras as opposed to the vital hostiles. There are no hostiles above the mind and cannot be, for it is with the mind that the opposition begins.

When the *Conversations* were translated, Mother made certain corrections so as to express the thought better than in the original report.

19 October 1935

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In *Entretiens* the Mother speaks of “*la marche interne de l'univers*” [p. 100]. Is there really an internal progress in the universe? Except in a few individuals there is hardly any change or progress in countries. It seems to me that, internally and externally, the universe is moving in a circle and always

crosses the same points on the circle, but essentially the quality of the points is the same.

“*Univers*” in French usually means not the whole universe but the “world”—the earth. There must be a progress in the earth-consciousness, otherwise there could have been no evolution. The evolution of mankind may go by circles or spirals, but there is all the same an opening of more and more complete possibilities till the possibility of the evolution of a higher race becomes valid.

1 September 1936

Part Three

Translations of

Prayers of the Mother

Prayers and Meditations

There is a Power that no ruler can command; there is a Happiness that no earthly success can bring; there is a Light that no wisdom can possess; there is a Knowledge that no philosophy and no science can master; there is a Bliss of which no satisfaction of desire can give the enjoyment; there is a thirst for Love that no human relation can appease; there is a Peace that one finds nowhere here, not even in death.

It is the Power, the Happiness, the Light, the Knowledge, the Bliss, the Love, the Peace that flow from the Divine Grace.

Sri Aurobindo's translation
of the Mother's prayer of December 28, 1928

Prayers and Meditations¹

November 28, 1913²

Mother Divine, grant that today may bring to us a completer consecration to Thy Will, a more integral gift of ourselves to Thy work, a more total forgetfulness of self, a greater illumination, a purer love. Grant that in a communion growing ever deeper, more constant and entire, we may be united always more and more closely to Thee and become Thy servitors worthy of Thee. Remove from us all egoism, root out all petty vanity, greed and obscurity. May we be all ablaze with Thy divine Love; make us Thy torches in the world.

February 15, 1914

O Thou, sole Reality, Light of our light and Life of our life, Love supreme, Saviour of the world, grant that more and more I may be perfectly awakened to the awareness of Thy constant presence. Let all my acts conform to Thy law; let there be no difference between my will and Thine. Extricate me from the illusory consciousness of my mind, from its world of fantasies; let me identify my consciousness with the Absolute Consciousness, for that art Thou.

Give me constancy in the will to attain the end, give me firmness and energy and the courage which shakes off all torpor and lassitude.

Give me the peace of perfect disinterestedness, the peace that makes Thy presence felt and Thy intervention effective, the peace that is ever victorious over all bad will and every obscurity.

¹ Of the more than three hundred prayers in Prières et Méditations de la Mère, Sri Aurobindo translated twenty-four fully or in part. These twenty-four translations are presented in this section.

² The Mother titled this prayer: "A morning prayer". — Ed.

Grant, I implore Thee, that all in my being may be identified with Thee. May I be nothing else any more than a flame of love utterly awakened to a supreme realisation of Thee.

August 27, 1914

To be the divine love, love powerful, infinite, unfathomable, in every activity, in all the worlds of being — it is for this I cry to Thee, O Lord. Let me be consumed by this love divine, love powerful, infinite, unfathomable, in every activity, in all the worlds of being! Transmute me into that burning brazier so that all the atmosphere of earth may be purified with its flame.

O, to be Thy Love infinitely . . .

August 31, 1914

In this formidable disorder and terrible destruction can be seen a great working, a necessary toil preparing the earth for a new sowing which will rise in marvellous spikes of grain and give to the world the shining harvest of a new race. . . . The vision is clear and precise, the plan of Thy divine law so plainly traced that peace has come back and installed itself in the hearts of the workers. There are no more doubts and hesitations, no longer any anguish or impatience. There is only the grand straight line of the work eternally accomplishing itself in spite of all, against all, despite all contrary appearances and illusory detours. These physical personalities, moments unseizable in the infinite Becoming, know that they will have made humanity take one farther step, infallibly and without care for the inevitable results, whatever be the apparent momentary consequences: they unite themselves with Thee, O Master eternal, they unite themselves with Thee, O Mother universal, and in this double identity with That which is beyond and That which is all the manifestation they taste the infinite joy of the perfect certitude.

Peace, peace in all the world. . . .

War is an appearance,

Turmoil is an illusion,

Peace is there, immutable peace.

Mother, sweet Mother who I am, Thou art at once the destroyer and the builder.

The whole universe lives in Thy breast with all its life innumerable and Thou livest in Thy immensity in the least of its atoms.

And the aspiration of Thy infinitude turns towards That which is not manifested, to cry to it for a manifestation ever more complete and more perfect.

All is, in one time, in a triple and clairvoyant total consciousness, the Individual, the Universal, the Infinite.

September 1, 1914

O Mother Divine, with what fervour, what ardent love I came to Thee in Thy deepest consciousness, in Thy high status of sublime love and perfect felicity, and I nestled so close into Thy arms and loved Thee with so intense a love that I became altogether Thyself. Then in the silence of our mute ecstasy a voice from yet profounder depths arose and the voice said, "Turn towards those who have need of thy love." All the grades of consciousness appeared, all the successive worlds. Some were splendid and luminous, well ordered and clear; there knowledge was resplendent, expression was harmonious and vast, will was potent and invincible. Then the worlds darkened in a multiplicity more and more chaotic, the Energy became violent and the material world obscure and sorrowful. And when in our infinite love we perceived in its entirety the hideous suffering of the world of misery and ignorance, when we saw our children locked in a sombre struggle, flung upon each other by energies that had deviated from their true aim, we willed ardently that the light of Divine Love should be made manifest, a transfiguring force at the centre of these distracted elements. Then, that the will might be yet more powerful and effective, we turned towards Thee, O unthinkable Supreme, and we implored Thy aid. And from the unsounded depths of the Unknown a reply came sublime and formidable and we knew that the earth was saved.

September 25, 1914

A new light shall break upon the earth,
A new world shall be born,
And the things that were promised shall be fulfilled.

September 28, 1914

My pen is mute to chant Thy presence, O Lord; yet art Thou like a king who has taken entire possession of his kingdom. Thou art there, organising, putting all in place, developing and increasing every province. Thou awakenest those that were asleep. Thou makest active those that were sinking towards inertia; Thou art building a harmony out of the whole. A day will come when the harmony shall be achieved and all the country shall be by its very life the bearer of Thy word and Thy manifestation.

But meanwhile my pen is mute to chant Thy praises.

September 30, 1914

O Thou, Sublime Love, to whom I gave never any other name, but who art so wholly the very substance of my being, Thou whom I feel vibrant and alive in the least of my atoms even as in the infinite universe and beyond, Thou who breathest in every breath, movest in the heart of all activities, art radiant through all that is of good will and hidden behind all sufferings, Thou for whom I cherish a cult without limit which grows ever more intense, permit that I may with more and more reason feel that I am Thyself wholly.

And Thou, O Lord, who art all this made one and much more, O sovereign Master, extreme limit of our thought, who standest for us at the threshold of the Unknown, make rise from that Unthinkable some new splendour, some possibility of a loftier and more integral realisation, that Thy work may be accomplished and the universe take one step farther towards the sublime Identity, the supreme Manifestation.

And now my pen falls mute and I adore Thee in silence.

October 5, 1914

In the calm silence of Thy contemplation, O Divine Master, Nature is fortified and tempered anew. All principle of individuality is overpassed, she is plunged in Thy infinity that allows oneness to be realised in all domains without confusion, without disorder. The combined harmony of that which persists, that which progresses and that which eternally is, is little by little accomplished in an always more complex, more extended and more lofty equilibrium. And this interchange of the three modes of life allows the plenitude of the manifestation.

Many seek Thee at this hour in anguish and incertitude. May I be their mediator with Thee that Thy Light may illumine them, that Thy Peace may appease. My being is now only a point of support for Thy action and a centre for Thy consciousness. Where now are the limits, whither have fled the obstacles? Thou art the sovereign Lord of Thy kingdom.

October 7, 1914

Oh, let Light be poured on all the earth and Peace inhabit every heart. . . . Almost all know only the material life heavy, inert, conservative, obscure; their vital forces are so tied to this physical form of existence that, even when left to themselves and outside the body, they are still solely occupied with these material contingencies that are yet so harassing and painful. . . . Those in whom the mental life is awakened are restless, tormented, agitated, arbitrary, despotic. Caught altogether in the whirl of the renewals and transformations of which they dream, they are ready to destroy everything without knowledge of any foundation on which to construct and with their light made only of blinding flashes they increase yet more the confusion rather than help it to cease.

In all there lacks the unchanging peace of Thy sovereign contemplation and the calm vision of Thy immutable Eternity.

And with the infinite gratitude of the individual being to whom Thou hast accorded this surpassing grace, I implore Thee,

O Lord, that under cover of the present turmoil, in the very heart of this extreme confusion the miracle may be accomplished and Thy Law of supreme serenity and pure unchanging Light become visible to the perception of all and govern the earth in a humanity at last awakened to Thy divine consciousness.

O sweet Master, Thou hast heard my prayer, Thou wilt reply to my call.

October 14, 1914

Mother Divine, Thou art with us; every day Thou givest me the assurance, and closely united in an identity which grows more and more total, more and more constant, we turn to the Lord of the universe and to That which is beyond in a great aspiration towards the new Light. All the earth is in our arms like a sick child who must be cured and for whom one has a special affection because of his very weakness. Cradled on the immensity of the eternal becomings, ourselves those becomings, we contemplate hushed and glad the eternity of the immobile Silence where all is realised in the perfect Consciousness and immutable Existence, miraculous gate of all the unknown that is beyond.

Then is the veil torn, the inexpressible Glory uncovered and, suffused with the ineffable Splendour, we turn back towards the world to bring it the glad tidings.

Lord, Thou hast given me the happiness infinite. What being, what circumstances can have the power to take it away from me?

October 25, 1914

My aspiration to Thee, O Lord, has taken the form of a beautiful rose, harmonious, full in bloom, rich in fragrance. I stretch it out to Thee with both arms in a gesture of offering and I ask of Thee: "If my understanding is limited, widen it; if my knowledge is obscure, enlighten it; if my heart is empty of ardour, set it aflame; if my love is insignificant, make it intense; if my feelings are ignorant and egoistic, give them the full consciousness in the Truth." And the "I" which demands this of Thee, O Lord, is not a little personality lost amidst thousands of others; it is the whole earth that aspires to Thee in a movement full of fervour.

In the perfect silence of my contemplation all widens to infinity, and in the perfect peace of that silence Thou appearest in the resplendent glory of Thy Light.

November 8, 1914

For the plenitude of Thy Light we invoke Thee, O Lord! Awaken in us the power to express Thee.

All is mute in the being as in a desert crypt; but in the heart of the shadow, in the bosom of the silence burns the lamp that can never be extinguished, the fire of an ardent aspiration to know Thee and totally to live Thee.

The nights follow the days, new dawns unweariedly succeed to past dawns, but always there mounts the scented flame that no stormwind can force to vacillate. Higher it climbs and higher and one day attains the vault still closed, the last obstacle opposing our union. And so pure, so erect, so proud is the flame that suddenly the obstacle is dissolved.

Then Thou appearest in all Thy splendour, in the dazzling force of Thy infinite glory; at Thy contact the flame changes into a column of light that chases the shadows away for ever.

And the Word leaps forth, a supreme revelation!

February 15, 1915

O Lord of Truth, thrice have I implored Thy manifestation invoking Thee with deep fervour.

Then, as always, the whole being made its total submission. At that moment the consciousness perceived the individual being mental, vital and physical, covered all over with dust and this being lay prostrate before Thee, its forehead touching the earth, dust in the dust, and it cried to Thee, "O Lord, this being made of dust prostrates itself before Thee praying to be consumed with the fire of the Truth that it may henceforth manifest only Thee." Then Thou saidst to it, "Arise, thou art pure of all that is dust." And suddenly, in a stroke, all the dust sank from it like a cloak that falls on the earth, and the being appeared erect, always as substantial but resplendent with a dazzling light.

March 3, 1915

Solitude, a harsh intense solitude, and always this strong impression of having been flung down headlong into a hell of darkness! Never at any moment of my life, in any circumstances have I felt myself living in surroundings so entirely opposite to all that I am conscious of as true, so contrary to all that is the essence of my life. Sometimes when the impression and the contrast grow very intense, I cannot prevent my total submission from taking on a hue of melancholy, and the calm and mute converse with the Master within is transformed for a moment into an invocation that almost supplicates, "O Lord, what have I done that Thou hast thrown me thus into the sombre Night?" But immediately the aspiration rises, still more ardent, "Spare this being all weakness; suffer it to be the docile and clear-eyed instrument of Thy work, whatever that work may be."

March 7, 1915

I am exiled from every spiritual happiness, and of all ordeals this, O Lord, is surely the most painful that Thou canst impose: but most of all the withdrawal of Thy Will which seems to be a sign of total disapprobation. Strong is the growing sense of rejection and it needs all the ardour of an untiring faith to keep the external consciousness thus abandoned to itself from being invaded by an irremediable sorrow. . . .

But it refuses to despair, it refuses to believe that the misfortune is irreparable; it waits with humility in an obscure and hidden effort and struggle for the breath of Thy perfect joy to penetrate it again. And perhaps each of its modest and secret victories is a true help brought to the earth. . . .

If it were possible to come definitively out of this external consciousness, to take refuge in the divine consciousness! But that Thou hast forbidden and still and always Thou forbidst it. No flight out of the world! The burden of its darkness and ugliness must be borne to the end even if all divine succour seems to be withdrawn. I must remain in the bosom of the Night and walk on without compass, without beacon-light, without inner guide. . . .

I will not even implore Thy mercy; for what Thou willst for me, I too will. All my energy is in tension solely to advance, always to advance, step after step, despite the depth of the darkness, despite the obstacles of the way, and whatever comes, O Lord, it is with a fervent and unchanging love that Thy decision will be welcomed. Even if Thou findest the instrument unfit to serve Thee, the instrument belongs to itself no more, it is Thine; Thou canst destroy or magnify it, it exists not in itself, it wills nothing, it can do nothing without Thee.

March 8, 1915

For the most part the condition is one of calm and profound indifference; the being feels neither desire nor repulsion, neither enthusiasm nor depression, neither joy nor sorrow. It regards life as a spectacle in which it takes only a very small part; it perceives its actions and reactions, conflicts and forces as things that at once belong to its own existence which overflows the small personality on every side and yet to that personality are altogether foreign and remote.

But from time to time a great Breath passes, a great Breath of sorrow, of anguished isolation, of spiritual destitution,—one might almost say, the despairing appeal of Earth abandoned by the Divine. It is a pang as silent as it is cruel, a sorrow submissive, without revolt, without any desire to avoid or pass out of it and full of an infinite sweetness in which suffering and felicity are closely wedded, something infinitely vast, great and deep, too great, too deep perhaps to be understood by men—something that holds in it the seed of Tomorrow.

December 26, 1916

Always the word Thou makest me hear in the silence is sweet and encouraging, O Lord. But I see not in what this instrument is worthy of the grace Thou accordest to it or how it will have the capacity to realise what Thou attendest from it. All in it appears so small, weak and ordinary, so lacking in intensity and force and amplitude in comparison with what it should be to undertake this overwhelming role. But I know that what the mind thinks is of little importance. The mind itself knows it and, passive, it awaits the working out of Thy decree.

Thou bidst me strive without cease, and I could wish to have the indomitable ardour that prevails over every difficulty. But Thou hast put in my heart a peace so smiling that I fear I no longer know even how to strive. Things develop in me, faculties and activities, as flowers bloom, spontaneously and without effort, in a joy to be and a joy to grow, a joy to manifest Thee,

whatever the mode of Thy manifestation. If struggle there is, it is so gentle and easy that it can hardly be given the name. But how small is this heart to contain so great a love! and how weak this vital and physical being to carry the power to distribute it! Thus Thou hast placed me on the threshold of the marvellous Way, but will my feet have the strength to advance upon it? . . . But Thou repliest to me that my movement is to soar and it would be an error to wish to walk. . . . O Lord, how infinite is Thy compassion! Once more Thou hast taken me in Thy omnipotent arms and cradled me on Thy unfathomable heart, and Thy heart said to me, "Torment not thyself at all, be confident like a child: art thou not myself crystallised for my work?"

December 27, 1916

O my beloved Lord, my heart is bowed before Thee, my arms are stretched towards Thee imploring Thee to set all this being on fire with Thy sublime love that it may radiate from there on the world. My heart is wide open in my breast; my heart is open and turned towards Thee, it is open and empty that Thou mayst fill it with Thy divine Love; it is empty of all but Thee and Thy presence fills it through and through and yet leaves it empty, for it can contain also all the infinite variety of the manifested world. . . .

O Lord, my arms are outstretched in supplication towards Thee, my heart is wide open before Thee, that Thou mayst make of it a reservoir of Thy infinite love.

"Love me in all things, everywhere and in all beings" was Thy reply. I prostrate myself before Thee and ask of Thee to give me that power.

December 29, 1916

O my sweet Lord, teach me to be the instrument of Thy Love.

March 31, 1917

Each time that a heart leaps at the touch of Thy divine Breath, a little more beauty seems to be born upon the earth, the air is embalmed with a sweet perfume and all becomes more friendly.

How great is Thy power, O Lord of all existences, that an atom of Thy joy is sufficient to efface so much darkness, so many sorrows and a single ray of Thy glory can light up thus the dullest pebble, illumine the blackest consciousness!

Thou hast heaped Thy favours upon me, Thou hast unveiled to me many secrets, Thou hast made me taste many unexpected and unhoped-for joys, but no grace of Thine can be equal to this Thou grantest to me when a heart leaps at the touch of Thy divine Breath.

At these blessed hours all earth sings a hymn of gladness, the grasses shudder with pleasure, the air is vibrant with light, the trees lift towards heaven their most ardent prayer, the chant of the birds becomes a canticle, the waves of the sea billow with love, the smile of children tells of the infinite and the souls of men appear in their eyes.

Tell me, wilt Thou grant me the marvellous power to give birth to this dawn in expectant hearts, to awaken the consciousness of men to Thy sublime presence and in this bare and sorrowful world awaken a little of Thy true Paradise? What happiness, what riches, what terrestrial powers can equal this wonderful gift?

O Lord, never have I implored Thee in vain, for that which speaks to Thee is Thyself in me.

Drop by drop Thou allowest to fall in a fertilising rain the living and redeeming flame of Thy almighty love. When these drops of eternal light descend softly on our world of obscure ignorance, one would say a rain upon earth of golden stars one by one from a sombre firmament.

All kneels in mute devotion before this ever-renewed miracle.

April 28, 1917

“Lo! here are flowers and benedictions! here is the smile of divine Love! It is without preferences and without repulsions. It streams out towards all in a generous flow and never takes back its marvellous gifts.”

Her arms outstretched in a gesture of ecstasy, the eternal Mother pours upon the world the unceasing dew of her purest love.

July 12, 1918

Suddenly, before Thee, all my pride fell. I understood how futile it was in Thy Presence to wish to surmount oneself, and I wept, wept abundantly and without constraint the sweetest tears of my life. Tears sweet and beneficent, tears that opened my heart without constraint before Thee and melted in one miraculous moment all the remaining obstacles that could separate me from Thee!

And now, although I weep no longer, I feel so near, so near to Thee that my whole being quivers with joy.

Let me stammer out my homage:

I have cried too with the joy of a child, “O supreme and only Confidant, Thou who knowest beforehand all we can say to Thee because Thou art its source!

“O supreme and only Friend, Thou who acceptest, Thou who lovest, Thou who understandest us just as we are, because it is Thyself who hast so made us!

“O supreme and only Guide, Thou who never gainsayest our highest will because it is Thou Thyself who wildest in it!

“It would be folly to seek elsewhere than in Thee for one who will listen, understand, love and guide, since always Thou art there ready to our call and never wilt Thou fail us.

“Thou hast made me know the supreme, the sublime joy of a perfect confidence, an absolute security, a surrender total and without reserve or colouring, free from effort and constraint.

“Joyous like a child I have smiled and wept at once before Thee, O my well-Beloved!”

December 28, 1928

There is a Power that no ruler can command; there is a Happiness that no earthly success can bring; there is a Light that no wisdom can possess; there is a Knowledge that no philosophy and no science can master; there is a Bliss of which no satisfaction of desire can give the enjoyment; there is a thirst for Love that no human relation can appease; there is a Peace that one finds nowhere here, not even in death.

It is the Power, the Happiness, the Light, the Knowledge, the Bliss, the Love, the Peace that flow from the Divine Grace.

Radha's Prayer

Radha's Prayer¹

O Thou whom at first sight I knew for the Lord of my being and my God, receive my offering.

Thine are all my thoughts, all my emotions, all the sentiments of my heart, all my sensations, all the movements of my life, each cell of my body, each drop of my blood. I am absolutely and altogether Thine, Thine without reserve. What Thou wilt of me, that I shall be. Whether Thou choosest for me life or death, happiness or sorrow, pleasure or suffering, all that comes to me from Thee will be welcome. Each one of Thy gifts will be always for me a gift divine bringing with it the supreme Felicity.

13 January 1932

¹ *The Mother originally wrote this prayer in English and then translated it into French the following day. Later Sri Aurobindo translated the French version into English; this is the translation presented above. The Mother's original prayer in English is given in the Note on the Texts.—Ed.*

Note on the Texts

Note on the Texts

THE MOTHER WITH LETTERS ON THE MOTHER consists of two separate but related works: *The Mother*, a collection of short prose pieces on the Mother, and *Letters on the Mother*, a selection of letters by Sri Aurobindo in which he referred to the Mother in her transcendent, universal and individual aspects. In addition, the volume contains Sri Aurobindo's translations of selections from the Mother's *Prayers and Meditations* as well as his translation of "Radha's Prayer". *The Mother*, the *Letters* and the translations are published in three separate parts.

PART ONE: THE MOTHER

The Mother was first published as a booklet in 1928. It consists of six chapters, all of which were written in 1927. Each chapter has a separate history.

Chapter 1. Sri Aurobindo wrote this essay as a message for distribution on 21 February 1927, the birthday of the Mother. Three months earlier, after an important spiritual experience of 24 November 1926, Sri Aurobindo had withdrawn from outward contacts and placed the Mother in charge of the disciples who had gathered around him. He told them at that time to turn entirely to her for spiritual and practical guidance. This message therefore had a special significance in its immediate historical context. In 1928 it was published as the first chapter of *The Mother*.

Chapter 2. Sri Aurobindo wrote this piece after he had finished replying to a series of questions asked by Motilal Mehta, a disciple living in Gujarat, in a letter dated 30 May 1927. Motilal's questions and Sri Aurobindo's replies are published on page 107 of *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*, volume 35 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. One of Motilal's questions referred to the message that is published as Chapter 1 of *The Mother*. Another question asked for "the

signs of the coming of the Divine Grace". Sri Aurobindo concluded his reply to this question as follows: "Calling on God to do everything and save one all the trouble and struggle is a self-deception and does not lead to freedom and perfection." He then expanded on this theme in a continuation of the letter, which a year later was published as the second chapter of *The Mother*.

Chapter 3. Sri Aurobindo wrote this piece as a letter to Punamchand Shah, a disciple living in Gujarat, on 1 August 1927. In 1928 it was published as the third chapter of *The Mother*.

Chapter 4. Sri Aurobindo wrote this undated piece as a letter to Punamchand Shah. At the time Punamchand was involved in the collection of money for Sri Aurobindo's work. (See *Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest*, volume 36 of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, pp. 428–38.) In 1928 the letter was published as the fourth chapter of *The Mother*.

Chapter 5. Sri Aurobindo wrote this piece as a letter to Punamchand Shah on 19 August 1927. In 1928 it was published as the fifth chapter of *The Mother*.

Chapter 6. Sri Aurobindo wrote this essay dealing with the four aspects of the Mother and related topics in the autumn of 1927 with the idea of publishing it in the booklet that eventually became *The Mother*. Referring to the essay in a letter to Punamchand Shah dated 3 October 1927, he wrote: "The 'Four Aspects' is half written and will be finished in a few days. It has been decided to publish these four writings with the February message in Calcutta."¹ The essay was published as the sixth chapter of *The Mother* in 1928.

Once Sri Aurobindo had finished work on the "Four Aspects" essay, he gave his attention to the planned booklet. Work on the project was underway on 21 November, when he wrote in a letter that the publication of the booklet had been entrusted to Rameshwar De of the Arya Sahitya Bhawan, Calcutta. The publishers completed their work during the early part of 1928. Copies of the booklet reached the Ashram in Pondicherry in April of that year. The book has been reprinted many times since 1928. The text in the present volume has been checked against Sri Aurobindo's manuscripts and early editions.

¹ *Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest*, p. 429.

In the present text there are three verbal corrections which differ from previous editions; all three follow the manuscript readings. The corrections are: (1) page 11, line 30: money *corrected to* money-force; (2) page 13, line 28: breathing or *corrected to* breathing and; (3) page 25, line 17: alteration *corrected to* alternation.

Sri Aurobindo accorded *The Mother* a special place among his works. In 1937 he wrote to a disciple who had sent him the draft of a review of the book: “I think it [*the review*] will give the reader the impression that *The Mother* is a philosophical or practical exposition of Yoga — while its atmosphere is really not that at all.” To a disciple who asked if he should continue the practice of reciting *The Mother* “silently with an aspiration to know what it contains”, Sri Aurobindo replied, “Yes, if you find that it helps you.”²

PART TWO: LETTERS ON THE MOTHER

Sri Aurobindo wrote the letters included in this part between 1927 and 1950. They have been selected by the editors from the much larger body of letters that Sri Aurobindo wrote to disciples during those years. Significant letters from this corpus appear in seven volumes of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO: *Letters on Poetry and Art* (volume 27), *Letters on Yoga* (volumes 28–31), *Letters on Himself and the Ashram* (volume 35), and the present volume. Letters of Sri Aurobindo written before 1927 to his family, friends, associates and early disciples are included in *Autobiographical Notes and Other Writings of Historical Interest* (volume 36). The titles of these works specify the nature of the letters included in each, but there is some overlap. There are, for example, many letters mentioning the Mother in *Letters on Yoga* and *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*. Those selected for inclusion in the present volume have the Mother as their central focus. The questions and comments of the correspondent, which are printed along with many of the letters, bring out the historical circumstances in which they were written.

Many of the letters in the present volume appeared earlier in *Letters of Sri Aurobindo on the Mother* (1951), *Sri Aurobindo on*

² *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*, p. 102.

Himself and on the Mother (1953), and *The Mother with Letters on the Mother and Translations of Prayers and Meditations*, volume 25 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library (1972).

The Writing of the Letters

Sri Aurobindo wrote most of the letters included in this volume to members of his Ashram, the rest to correspondents living outside it. Ashram members wrote to him in notebooks or on loose sheets of paper that were sent to him in an internal “post” once or twice a day. Letters from outside that Sri Aurobindo’s secretary thought he might like to see were sent at the same time. Correspondents wrote in English if they were able to. A good number, however, wrote in Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi or French, all of which Sri Aurobindo read fluently, or in other languages that were translated into English for him. Most letters were addressed to the Mother, even though most correspondents assumed that Sri Aurobindo would reply to them.

Sri Aurobindo generally replied on the sheets of paper (bound or loose) on which the correspondents wrote their comments and questions, writing below them or in the margin or between the lines. Sometimes, however, he wrote his answer on a separate, small sheet of paper from a “bloc-note” pad. In some cases he had his secretary prepare a typed copy of his letter, which he revised before it was sent. In other cases, particularly when the correspondent was living outside the Ashram, he addressed his reply not to the correspondent but to his secretary, who quoted, paraphrased or translated Sri Aurobindo’s reply and signed the letter himself.

While going through Sri Aurobindo’s replies, the reader should keep in mind that each one was written to a specific person at a specific time, in specific circumstances and for a specific purpose. Each subject taken up was one that arose in regard to the correspondent’s inner or outer needs, or in answer to the correspondent’s questions. Sri Aurobindo varied the style and tone of his replies in accordance with his relationship with the correspondent (or, in the case of people writing from outside, the lack of it).

Although the letters were written to specific recipients, they contain much of general interest. This justifies their inclusion in a volume

destined for the general public. But it is important for the reader to bear in mind some remarks that Sri Aurobindo made during the 1930s about the proper use of his letters:

It is not a fact that all I write is meant equally for everybody. That assumes that everybody is alike and there is no difference between sadhak and sadhak. If it were so everybody would advance alike and have the same experiences and take the same time to progress by the same steps and stages. It is not so at all.³

I should like to say, in passing, that it is not always safe to apply practically to oneself what has been written for another. Each sadhak is a case by himself and one cannot always or often take a mental rule and apply it rigidly to all who are practising the Yoga.⁴

The tendency to take what I lay down for one and apply it without discrimination to another is responsible for much misunderstanding. A general statement too, true in itself, cannot be applied to everyone alike or applied now and immediately without consideration of condition or circumstance or person or time.⁵

Sri Aurobindo wrote the great majority of these letters between 1931 and 1937. He sometimes dated his answers, but most of the dates given at the end of the letters are those of the letters or notebook entries to which he was replying.

The Typing and Revision of the Letters

Most of the shorter letters in this volume, and many of the longer ones, were not typed or revised during Sri Aurobindo's lifetime and are reproduced here directly from his handwritten manuscripts. But a good number of the letters were, as mentioned above, typed for Sri Aurobindo and revised by him. Other letters were typed by the recipients for their

³ *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*, p. 475.

⁴ *Letters on Himself and the Ashram*, p. 473.

⁵ *The Mother with Letters on the Mother*, p. 349.

own personal use or for circulation within the Ashram. Circulation was at first restricted to members of the Ashram and others whom Sri Aurobindo had accepted as disciples. When letters were circulated, personal references were removed. Persons mentioned by Sri Aurobindo were indicated by initials, or by the letters X, Y, etc. Copies of these typed letters were kept by Sri Aurobindo's secretary and sometimes presented to him for revision. Sometimes the typed copies contained typing errors or textual alterations. Recipients of letters, when they typed them up, sometimes omitted passages that seemed to them to be of no general interest. In a few cases, recipients added words or phrases that they believed made Sri Aurobindo's intentions clearer. Some of these alterations remained even after Sri Aurobindo revised the copies.

Sri Aurobindo's revision amounted sometimes to a complete rewriting of the letter, sometimes to making minor changes here and there. He generally removed personal references if this had not already been done by the typist. When necessary, he also rewrote the openings or other parts of the answers in order to free them from dependence on the correspondent's question.

The Publication of the Letters

During the early 1950s, the principal editor of Sri Aurobindo's letters conceived and organised two volumes containing Sri Aurobindo's letters on the Mother and on himself. The first of these, *Letters of Sri Aurobindo on the Mother*, was published in 1951. The second, *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother*, was published two years later. The editor arranged the contents of the latter volume in three parts: (1) Sri Aurobindo on Himself: Notes and Letters on His Life; (2) Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother; and (3) Sri Aurobindo on the Mother. Part 3 was an expansion of the text of *Letters of Sri Aurobindo on the Mother* (1951).

In 1972, the material making up *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* was incorporated in two different volumes: *On Himself: Compiled from Notes and Letters* (volume 26 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library) and *The Mother with Letters on the Mother and Translations of Prayers and Meditations* (volume 25 of the Centenary Library).

In THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO, the material in Part One of *On Himself* is incorporated in two volumes: *Letters on Himself and the Ashram* (volume 35) and *Autobiographical Notes* (volume 36), and is discussed in the Note on the Texts in those volumes. The material in Part Two of *On Himself*, headed “Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother”, is incorporated in Part Two of the present volume, primarily in Section Two, “The Mother, Sri Aurobindo and the Integral Yoga”. The present volume contains many letters on the Mother that did not appear in the Centenary Library edition of *The Mother with Letters on the Mother and On Himself*.

The editor of *Letters of Sri Aurobindo on the Mother* (1951) and *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* (1953) included edited versions of the correspondents’ questions if he thought they would help the reader to understand Sri Aurobindo’s replies. He also placed headings before individual letters or groups of letters and supplied the dates if they were known. The editors of the present volume have continued these practices, adding many headings and edited questions, and supplying dates for all letters that were dated or for which there was reliable dating information.

The Selection, Arrangement and Editing of the Letters in the Present Volume

The corpus of Sri Aurobindo’s correspondence between 1927 and 1950 consists of tens of thousands of replies that he wrote to hundreds of correspondents. Most of the replies, however, were written to a few dozen disciples, almost all of them resident members of his Ashram. A smaller number of disciples, no more than a dozen, received more than half of the entire body of published letters. In compiling the volumes of Sri Aurobindo’s correspondence published in THE COMPLETE WORKS, the editors have gone through all known manuscripts, typed copies or photographic copies of manuscripts, and printed texts. From these sources they have selected the letters that seemed suitable for publication. This selection includes most letters consisting of more than a few words that deal with topics of general interest. Electronic texts of the selected letters were then produced and checked against all handwritten, typed and printed versions.

The selection and arrangement of the material in this volume is the work of the editors. The underlying structure of Part Two of *The Mother with Letters on the Mother* (1972) has been preserved, but the letters have been rearranged under new section and group headings. In a note of February 1936, Sri Aurobindo wrote that the placing of letters in group categories was possible in the case of “letters about sadhana”, which could “very easily fall under different heads”.

Part Two, “Letters on the Mother” consists of almost 1400 separate items, an “item” being defined as what is published between one heading or asterisk and another heading or asterisk. Many items correspond exactly to individual letters; other items, however, consist of portions of single letters, or two or more letters or portions of letters that were joined together by earlier editors or typists and revised in that form by Sri Aurobindo. In the present volume portions of letters that had been separated by previous editors have sometimes been reunited. In some cases, however, the separation has been considered justifiable and been retained.

In some cases the text of a given letter has been published in more than one volume of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. Some of this doubling of letters occurs between *Letters on Yoga* and *The Mother with Letters on the Mother*. Sometimes Sri Aurobindo’s revised version of a letter has been placed in *Letters on Yoga*, while the original handwritten version, along with the recipient’s question, has been put in *The Mother with Letters on the Mother*.

As in previous collections of Sri Aurobindo’s letters, names of members of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and of disciples living outside the Ashram have been replaced by the letters X, Y, Z, etc. In any given letter, X stands for the first name replaced, Y for the second, Z for the third, A for the fourth, and so on. An X in a given letter has no necessary relation to an X in another letter.

Following a practice begun in *Letters of Sri Aurobindo on the Mother* (1951) and *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother* (1953), the editors of the present volume have included the questions to which Sri Aurobindo replied, or the portions of the correspondents’ letters on which he commented, whenever these are available and helpful for understanding his replies or comments. As a rule, only as much of a correspondent’s letter has been given as is needed to understand

the response. In some cases the questions have been lightly revised for the sake of clarity. Mistakes of grammar, spelling and punctuation due to the correspondent's imperfect grasp of English have been corrected. Questions written in languages other than English have been translated. When the question is not available, only Sri Aurobindo's reply is printed.

Readers should note that Sri Aurobindo almost always spelled the word "Asram" without an "h" though some of his correspondents occasionally wrote "Ashram". By the late 1940s, when "Ashram" had become the standard spelling in the Ashram's publications, Sri Aurobindo was no longer writing letters himself but dictated them to a disciple, who tended to write "Ashram". This spelling therefore occurs in letters of the final period, as well as in headings and other editorial matter throughout the book.

French Original of a Letter in Section Four

In the letter of 27 February 1933 on page 596, the question and the Mother's reply to it in the footnote were originally written in French:

Pourquoi la Mère s'habille-t-elle avec des vêtements riches et beaux?

The Mother: *Avez-vous donc pour conception que le Divin doit être représenté sur terre par la pauvreté et la laideur?*

English Translations of French Words in "On Prières et Méditations de la Mère" in Section Five

Page French Original — English Translation

601 *divin Maître* — divine Master

601 *avec notre divine Mère* — with our divine Mother

602 *Seigneur* — Lord

602 *Telles furent les deux phrases que j'écrivis hier par une sorte de nécessité absolue. La première, comme si la puissance de la prière ne serait complète que si elle était tracée sur le papier* — These were two sentences I wrote yesterday

- by a kind of absolute necessity. The first, as though the power of the prayer would not be complete unless it were traced on paper.
- 602 *Ta splendeur veut rayonner* — Thy splendour wants to radiate
 603 *et le raisonnement est une faculté humaine, c'est-à-dire individuelle* — but reasoning is a human faculty, that is, it is individual
- 603 *elle est consciente, voulue* — it is conscious, willed
- 603 *Les hommes, poussés par le conflit des forces, accomplissent un sublime sacrifice* — Men, driven by the conflict of forces, are performing a sublime sacrifice
- 603 *pure lumière* — pure light
- 603 *Force Divine* — divine Force
- 605 *chacun des grands êtres Asouriques qui ont résolu d'être Tes serviteurs* — each one of the great Asuric beings who have resolved to be Thy servitors
- 605 *coup de diplomatie* — diplomatic coup
- 606 *La joie contenue dans l'activité est compensée et équilibrée par la joie plus grande peut-être encore contenue dans le retrait de toute activité* — The joy that is contained in activity is compensated and balanced by the perhaps still greater joy contained in withdrawal from all activity
- 606 *dans tous les coins du monde une de Tes divines pierres est posée par la puissance de la pensée consciente et formatrice* — in every corner of the world one of Thy divine stones is laid by the power of conscious and formative thought
- 607 *Il faut à chaque instant savoir tout perdre pour tout gagner* — We must know at each moment how to lose everything that we may gain everything
- 607 *Il [mon être] sait que cet état d'amour actif doit être constant et impersonnel, c'est-à-dire tout à fait indépendant des circonstances et des personnes, puisqu'il ne peut et ne doit être concentré sur aucune en particulier* — It [my being] knows that this active state of love should be constant and impersonal, that is, absolutely independent of circumstances and persons, since it cannot and must not be concentrated upon any one thing in particular

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- 608 *La Paix régnera sur terre* — Peace will reign upon earth

**Original English Texts of French Words
in “On Entretiens avec la Mère” in Section Five**

French Translation — English Original

- 623 *Même ceux qui ont la volonté de s'enfuir [du monde], quand ils arrivent de l'autre côté, peuvent trouver que la fuite ne sert pas à grand-chose après tout* — And as for those who have the will of running away [from the world], even they, when they go over to the other side, may find that the flight was not of much use after all.
- 623 *En fait, la mort a été attachée à toute vie sur terre* — Death as a fact has been attached to all life upon earth
- 623 *Si cette croyance pouvait être rejetée, d'abord de la mentalité consciente, . . . la mort ne serait plus inévitable* — If this belief could be cast out first from the conscious mind, . . . death would no longer be inevitable
- 624 *êtres pervers et hostiles de plus grande envergure et d'une plus haute origine que tous ceux dont j'ai parlé jusqu'à présent* — perverse or hostile beings of a greater make and higher origin than those of whom I have till now spoken
- 624 *la marche interne de l'univers* — the inner march of the universe

PART THREE: TRANSLATIONS OF PRAYERS OF THE MOTHER

Prières et Méditations de la Mère

The Mother's *Prières et Méditations de la Mère* consists of extracts from her spiritual journal which she selected for publication. The first edition of the French original was printed for private circulation in 1932. An edition meant for the general public was released in 1944, and new editions followed in 1952, 1973, 1980 and 1990. In 1952 the title was shortened to *Prières et Méditations*.

An English translation of the entire text of *Prières et Méditations de la Mère* was published in 1948. A second, newly translated edition

came out in 1979; the text of this edition was reproduced in 2003.

Of the 313 prayers in the original French edition of *Prières et Méditations de la Mère*, only 24 were translated fully or in part by Sri Aurobindo. His own handwritten manuscripts of these prayers or parts of prayers still exist. Twenty-two of the 24 translations were first published in 1941 in *Prayers and Meditations of the Mother*, which contained 61 prayers; the remaining two translations were published subsequently: the prayer of 28 November 1913 was brought out in 1962 in a slightly enlarged edition of the book above; the prayer of 28 December 1928 came out in 1979 in a complete translation of all the prayers, entitled *Prayers and Meditations*, which is volume 1 of the Collected Works of the Mother. These 24 translations, along with “Radha’s Prayer”, make up the contents of Part Three of the present volume. Sri Aurobindo also revised in his own hand translations of around one hundred prayers done by others. These revised translations have not been included in the present volume; more than half were first published in the 1941 edition mentioned above.

Radha’s Prayer. The Mother originally wrote “Radha’s Prayer” in English on 12 January 1932 and rendered it into French the following day. Sri Aurobindo then translated the French version into English.

The Mother wrote this prayer for a disciple who was preparing to perform a dance about Radha. In a letter to the disciple the Mother wrote:

To complete what I told you yesterday about Radha’s dance
I have noted this down as an indication of the thought and
feeling Radha must have within her when she stands at the
end in front of Krishna:

“Every thought of my mind, every emotion of my heart,
every movement of my being, every feeling and every sensa-
tion, each cell of my body, each drop of my blood, all, all is
yours, yours absolutely, yours without reserve. You can decide
my life or my death, my happiness or my sorrow, my pleasure
or my pain; whatever you do with me, whatever comes to me
from you will lead me to the Divine Rapture.”⁶

⁶ *Words of the Mother—III* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 2004), Collected Works of the Mother, volume 15, p. 209.